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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pentagon to extend halt on travel

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Department restrictions barring troops, their families and civilian workers from nearly all official travel will not be lifted May 11 when the initial orders were set to expire, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Tuesday.

The worldwide travel halt has stopped thousands of military moves and has forced some deployed units to remain overseas longer than expected. Esper did not announce immediately how long he expected the stop-movement order to last. But a new target date to end the restrictions meant to help thwart the coronavirus spread could be announced this week, he said.

"At this point in time, since the expiration of the first stop-movement order expires on May 11, we want to give our folks sufficient time to make adjustments and to socialize with them that we are going to be extending beyond that May 11," Esper told reporters during a video news briefing from the Pentagon. "While I understand the impact this has on our troops and our families, this is a necessary measure to keep our people safe and our military ready to act."

SEE TRAVEL ON PAGE 7



'Arduous and tough situation'

Military medical personnel deployed to front lines feel strain of US virus fight

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NATHAN HAMMACK/AP

Army Sgt. Marleny Medina, assigned to the 1st Medical Brigade deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, asks a COVID-19 patient about his medical history at the Javits New York Medical Station's patient receiving dock April 9.

Roosevelt's fateful Vietnam port call had blessing of Pacific's highest commanders

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — President Donald Trump has criticized the ousted skipper of the USS Theodore Roosevelt for risking a stop last month in Vietnam, exposing his crew to the coronavirus that has stricken more than 600 sailors.

In the days after the aircraft carrier completed its historic five-day



Crozier

port call to Danang that ran March 5-8, crew members began exhibiting symptoms of the disease, which originated in China late last year.

The Roosevelt's commander, Capt. Brett Crozier, was fired for raising alarm over the ship's uncontrolled contagion, and the carrier is now in Guam grappling with the unfolding crisis, which has left one sailor dead and several in intensive care.

"I don't know who gave the orders

to stop in Vietnam, but they stopped in Vietnam, and all of a sudden they get on and now you have over 500 sailors and people on the ship that are infected," Trump said to a Reuters reporter at the White House briefing Monday. "I don't know whose idea that was, but that wasn't such a good idea in the middle of a pandemic."

SEE ROOSEVELT ON PAGE 5

RELATED COVERAGE

Military clinics in Europe using rapid test Page 6

Get the latest news on the virus outbreak
stripes.com/coronavirus

BUSINESS/WEATHER

US returns \$300M in stolen funds to Malaysia

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. has returned \$300 million to Malaysia that prosecutors say was stolen in a multibillion-dollar corruption scheme, authorities announced Tuesday.

The money comes from assets forfeited last year by a financier, Jho Low, in a Los Angeles federal settlement. The settlement covered assets that included a Manhattan penthouse, a Beverly Hills mansion, a Beverly Hills boutique

hotel, a luxury jet and paintings by Vincent Van Gogh and Claude Monet.

Low and his family agreed to forfeit more than \$700 million in assets and to date, the U.S. has returned or assisted Malaysia in recovering more than \$600 million, according to a U.S. Department of Justice statement.

Low, who is also known as Low Taek Jho, didn't acknowledge any wrongdoing in the civil settlement. However, he remains a fugitive from criminal charges filed

in New York that accuse him of bribery and money laundering.

Low was a consultant for a Malaysian state fund, 1Malaysia Development Berhad, set up in 2009 by then-Prime Minister Najib Razak to promote economic development. Prosecutors allege that Low used fund money for bribes and kickbacks to foreign officials.

U.S. investigators allege at least \$4.5 billion was stolen from the fund and laundered by Najib's associates.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (April 16)	\$1.07
Dollar buys (April 16)	60.8996
British pound (April 16)	\$1.22
Japanese yen (April 16)	105.00
South Korean won (April 16)	1,187.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3774
British pound	\$1.2473
Canada (Dollar)	1.4083
China (Yuan)	7.0685
Denmark (Krone)	6.8645
Egypt (Pound)	15.7841
Euro	\$1.0870/0.9199
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7507
Hungary (Forint)	223.10
Israel (Shekel)	3.6057
Japan (Yen)	107.82
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3113
Norway (Krone)	10.5335
Philippines (Peso)	50.75
Poland (Zloty)	4.17
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7593
Singapore (Dollar)	1.4523
South Korea (Won)	1,224.39
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9688
Thailand (Baht)	32.73
Turkey (New Lira)	6.8973

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.05
3-month bill	0.17
30-year bond	1.41

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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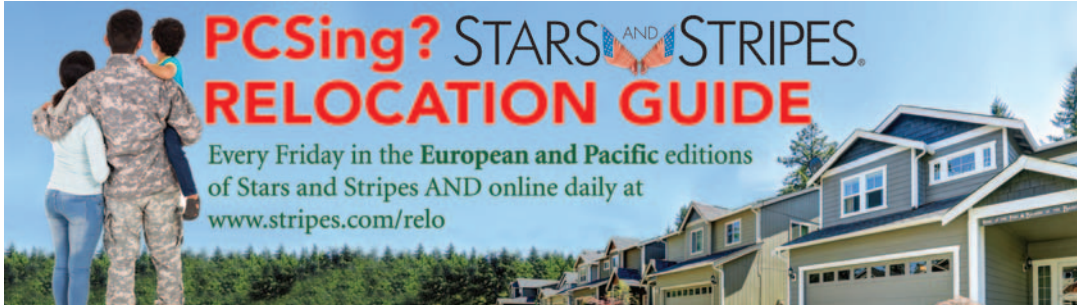
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WAR/MILITARY



RAHMAT GUL/AP

An Afghan National Army soldier stands guard at a checkpoint near the Bagram base in northern Kabul, Afghanistan, last week.

Taliban: US bombing insurgents in homes, contrary to agreement

By KATHY GANNON
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Washington peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad met with Pakistan's military chief Tuesday, a day after discussing the lagging U.S.-Taliban peace deal in Afghanistan with the chief negotiator for the insurgent movement.

The meetings included Gen. Scott Miller, head of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Statements from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and the U.S. military in Kabul said Washington was engaged in "ongoing efforts" to find a sustainable peace after decades of relentless war but the U.S. officials released no details.

Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen said the insurgent group's chief negotiator, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, used Monday's meeting at the Taliban's political office in Qatar to protest

attacks against Taliban fighters in their homes, contrary to provisions of the Feb. 29 agreement.

"Our men have been targeted in their residential areas while there is no room for such attacks in the agreement, either by the U.S. or their internal (Afghan) supporters," he said, a reference to Afghan National Security Forces.

The U.S. military has refused to address the Taliban's specific complaint but has said that it is abiding by the agreement and will continue to come to the aid of the Afghan military.

At the meeting with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa, Pakistan's military leaders reaffirmed their support for U.S. efforts and renewed their "commitment to act to advance a political settlement to the conflict," according to a statement released by the U.S. Embassy in the Pakistani capital.

At the heart of most of the talks, say Taliban and U.S. officials, is the demand for a reduction of violence. The Taliban have not been attacking U.S. and NATO troops since the agreement was signed, instead attacking Afghan forces in outlying areas. Washington wants a reduction to those attacks.

Shaheen said the Taliban are ready to negotiate a countryside cease-fire but only during intra-Afghan negotiations, the next critical step of the deal. However, getting to intra-Afghan negotiations, which Washington had hoped would begin weeks earlier, has mostly been held up by political turmoil in Kabul as dueling presidents fight over who is the real winner in last year's presidential elections and the government squabbles over the deal's call for the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners and 1,000 government prisoners.

Men seize, release tanker off coast of Iran

By JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Armed men boarded a Hong Kong-flagged tanker ship Tuesday off the coast of Iran near the crucial Strait of Hormuz, holding the ship for a short time before releasing it amid heightened tensions between Tehran and the U.S., authorities said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the seizure, though suspicion fell on Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. Iranian officials and state media did not immediately acknowledge the incident and the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet did not respond to a request for comment.

The incident comes after a private maritime intelligence firm warned of suspicious incidents in recent days near the strait, through which a fifth of all oil is traded. Oil tankers previously have been a target during the tensions.

The incident happened near Iran's Ras al-Khukh coast. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations organization said in an alert that the vessel "had been boarded by armed men while at anchor. All vessels in the vicinity are to stay vigilant and to report any incidents," the warning said, urging ships to exercise caution.

The U.K. organization last said the ship had been released and was underway under its captain's control, without elaborating.

Dryad Global, the private maritime intelligence firm that issued the first warnings about suspicious incidents, identified the ship as the Hong Kong-flagged SC Taipei bound for Saudi Arabia. It said the 22 crew members aboard were Chinese. It did not say how it knew the information.

The SC Taipei's satellite tracking beacon showed it off the coast of Iran in the general vicinity of the warning, according to data from the website Marine Traffic.com.

Prosecutors: ISIS plotted to hit US bases in Germany

By LOVEDAY MORRIS
AND LUISA BECK
The Washington Post.

BERLIN — German authorities on Wednesday arrested four suspected members of an Islamic State cell accused of plotting attacks on U.S. military bases in the country.

The Tajik nationals were detained in a series of early morning raids in the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the public prosecutor said in a statement. A fifth suspected member of the cell, identified as Ravsan B., was arrested a year earlier, the statement said.

The details released by prosecutors showed that the plans were already underway. The cell had scouted U.S. Air Force bases in Germany and obtained firearms and ammunition.

Prosecutors said Ravsan B. was in possession of instructions for the production of improvised explosive devices and had procured some of the necessary bomb-building materials online. He is also accused of agreeing to a contract killing in Albania

for \$40,000 to finance the plot, although the killing was not carried out.

German authorities did not release details of which U.S. air bases were targeted. Tens of thousands of U.S. troops are based in Germany, the biggest presence in any country other than Japan. Ramstein Air Base, in southwestern Germany, serves as the headquarters for the U.S. Air Force in Europe.

The suspects are accused of joining ISIS in January 2019, having originally planned to travel to Tajikistan to carry out "jihad" before turning their sights to targets in Germany. The cell was in touch with senior ISIS leaders in Syria and Afghanistan, according to German authorities, who said the group also funneled money to the cell through agents in Turkey.

The cell had also planned to murder an individual in Germany who had been publicly "critical of Islam," the statement said. It added that one member of the cell had already spied on the unidentified person.

Watchdog says Microsoft's \$10B cloud contract is legal

By ROBERT BURNS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A government watchdog agency said Wednesday the Pentagon's process for awarding a highly lucrative cloud computing contract to Microsoft was in line with legal and government purchasing standards.

The contract, potentially worth \$10 billion, was awarded to Microsoft last October, prompting tech rival Amazon to cry foul.

Amazon Web Services, a market leader in providing cloud computing services, had long been considered a leading candidate to run the Pentagon's Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure project, known as JEDI. The project will store and process vast amounts of classified data, allowing the U.S. military to improve communications with soldiers on the battlefield and use artificial intelligence to speed up its war planning and fighting capabilities.

Amazon sued the Pentagon after Microsoft won the contract. Work on the project has been halted as the lawsuit proceeds.

The review released Wednesday by the Defense Department's

inspector general did not draw a conclusion about whether Microsoft was appropriately declared the winner. Rather, it looked at whether the decision-making process was proper and legal. It also examined allegations of unethical behavior by Pentagon officials involved in the matter and generally determined that any ethical lapses did not influence the outcome.

Amazon has asserted that the bidding was improperly influenced by President Donald Trump's dislike of Amazon and its CEO, Jeff Bezos. Bezos owns The Washington Post, a news outlet often criticized by Trump.

A Pentagon spokesman, Lt. Col. Robert Carver, said the inspector general's report shows that the contract award process was fair and legal.

"This report should finally close the door on the media and corporate-driven attacks on the career procurement officials who have been working tirelessly to get the much needed JEDI cloud computing environment into the hands of our frontline warfighters while continuing to protect American taxpayers," Carver said.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

USFJ leader expands public health emergency

Order now covers all US military bases in Japan

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The commander of U.S. Forces Japan on Wednesday declared a public health emergency for all U.S. military installations in Japan, expanding an earlier order that covered only the area in and around Tokyo.

Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider on April 6 declared a public health emergency for U.S. bases in the Kanto Plain, near the Japanese capital. Tokyo is the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic in Japan. City officials reported 161 new cases on Tuesday.



Schneider

Schneider's action Wednesday extends that status to all installations across the country, from Misawa Air Base in the northeast to the many bases on the southern island prefecture of Okinawa.

The public health emergency will remain in effect through May 15 unless Schneider renews or terminates it sooner, the statement said.

"The declaration ensures commanders possess the necessary authorities to enforce compliance with health protection measures," it said. "It is applicable to anyone with access to U.S. installations or facilities and includes military, civilians, contractors, and host-nation employees."

Commanders of U.S. bases on the Kanto Plain have declared their own public health emergencies, which allow them to restrict the movements and activities, not only of troops, but also civilian employees, family members, retirees, contractors and local nationals with access to the facilities.

Base commanders in other parts of the country had held off on imposing stricter measures. However, that hasn't stopped them from punishing non-service members who ignore their guidelines.

Two civilians were barred from Sasebo Naval Base after security personnel found them in an off-base bar on Friday in violation of rules set by the Navy and restrictions imposed to combat the coronavirus.

USFJ, headquartered at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, "will continually assess necessary preventative measures and continues to encourage strict hygiene and social distancing to reduce the risk of transmission," the statement added.

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'Elephant walk' on Guam serves as timely airpower demonstration

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

With the USS Theodore Roosevelt sidelined nearby due to the coronavirus, the U.S. military on Guam exhibited a reminder of its deep bench this week in a region where global powers compete.

Fourteen aircraft paraded in a formation known as an "elephant walk" along the runway at Andersen Air Force Base on Monday. Among them were five B-52 Stratofortress strategic bombers; six KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refuelers; an MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter; and two unmanned aerial vehicles: an Air Force RQ-4 Global Hawk and a Navy MQ-4C Triton.

The elephant walk was meant to demonstrate the ability to "generate combat airpower at a moment's notice to ensure regional stability throughout the Indo-Pacific," according to the 36th Wing website.

The display was likely directed at China and North Korea, according to former Air Force officer Ralph Cossa, now an adviser for the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii.

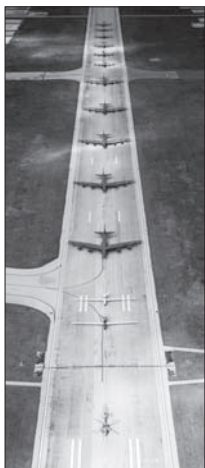
"They want to signal that, despite the problems with the carrier, we still have forces with the ability to respond," Cossa said Wednesday. "We want to show we are still ready to respond."

Over the weekend, China's Liaoning aircraft carrier passed between the Japanese islands of Okinawa and Miyako and east of Taiwan. The voyage showed that coronavirus has not impacted Beijing's carrier like it has those of the U.S. Navy, an unnamed Chinese military expert said Monday in the country's state-run Global Times newspaper.

However, Cossa said the Liaoning isn't a real threat to U.S. forces in the region.

"Chinese aircraft carriers don't make me lose a lot of sleep," he said. "I wouldn't want to be on one in a fight with the U.S. Navy."

A day after the Guam elephant



MICHAEL S. MURPHY/U.S. Air Force

A Navy MH-60S Knighthawk, Air Force RQ-4 Global Hawk, Navy MQ-4C Triton, Air Force B-52 Stratofortresses and KC-135 Stratotankers line up.

walk, North Korean fighter jets fired missiles into the sea off the country's eastern coast while units launched a salvo of cruise missiles from the ground, according to South Korea's military.

"Nothing gets the North Koreans' attention like B-52s," Cossa said.

The Roosevelt remains in Guam, where five sailors infected with coronavirus have been hospitalized. There are more than 600 positive cases among the crew, according to the Navy.

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MICHAEL S. MURPHY/U.S. Air Force

Aircraft perform an "elephant walk" at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, on Monday.



DIVINE COX/U.S. Air Force

An RQ-4 Global Hawk, a Navy MQ-4C Triton and Air Force B-52 Stratofortresses line up Monday.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



BRANDON RICHARDSON/U.S. Navy

A Navy public affairs officer poses with children at the Dorotha's Project Legacies Charity Center in Danang, Vietnam, during the USS Theodore Roosevelt's port call March 6.

Roosevelt: No travel restrictions to Vietnam had been issued at the time of the port call

FROM FRONT PAGE

But the decision to move forward with the port call was made by high-ranking Pacific military officials only after a thorough analysis of risks posed at that point in the spread of the virus, according to a written statement provided to Stars and Stripes by Pacific Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Myers Vasquez.

Three days before the Roosevelt arrived in Vietnam on March 5, Trump saw little risk posed by the virus. When a reporter asked Trump during a March 2 news conference whether it was "safe or appropriate" for him to continue holding arena-sized rallies, he responded, "I think it's safe, yeah. I think it's very safe."

At that time, the U.S. had just over 100 confirmed cases of the virus, with six deaths.

Planning for the Roosevelt's port call in Danang began in the fall and involved coordination among the U.S. Department of State, Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet and U.S. Embassy Vietnam with Vietnam's ministries of foreign affairs and defense, Vasquez said.

The intent was to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the U.S.-Vietnam diplomatic relations, coming decades after the end of the lengthy war between the two nations. The Roosevelt would be only the second aircraft carrier to visit Vietnam since the fall of Saigon in 1975.

The visit, which also included the guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill, was an important step in expanding the strategic partnership between the two countries by increasing cooperation in areas such as maritime security, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, Vasquez said.

Indo-Pacific Command sent an "execution order" to Pacific Fleet in January to formally set the carrier visit in motion, he said.

Pacific Fleet conducted a risk analysis looking at data from interagency health organizations, virus mitigation efforts for the

Another Roosevelt sailor hospitalized due to virus

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars And Stripes

WASHINGTON — A fifth sailor assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt has been hospitalized due to the coronavirus, the Navy announced Wednesday, as illnesses increase to more than 600 cases among the crew.

The sailor is being treated at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam where four other sailors were transferred Tuesday. One sailor remains in intensive care for observation due to shortness of breath.

The hospitalizations this week follow the death Monday of one Roosevelt sailor who had been in intensive care after having been unresponsive

April 9 while in quarantine on Guam. The sailor has not yet been identified, pending notification of next of kin.

The USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier has been in port in Guam since March 27 after an outbreak of the virus aboard the ship diverted it during a scheduled deployment.

As of Wednesday, there were 615 Roosevelt sailors with positive tests for the virus. Most of the about 4,800 member crew has been tested, with 3,958 receiving a negative test result.

The Navy has 951 positive cases of the virus among its military personnel, the highest case number of the military services.

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crews, confidence in the accuracy of Vietnam's public health reporting and actions already taken by Vietnam to isolate and contain the virus, Vasquez said.

With that analysis in hand, Pacific Fleet commander Adm. John Aquilino recommended the port visit be made, and Adm. Phil Davidson, head of Indo-Pacific Command, agreed, Vasquez said.

At the time of the port call, neither the State Department nor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had issued travel restrictions for American citizens to Vietnam.

A CDC representative in Vietnam assured Pacific Fleet that the port visit was "low risk," Vasquez said.

"Throughout the port visit all scheduled events in Da Nang were reviewed for potential COVID risk and additional support was provided by the host country to screen local participants at these events as well," he said. "A humanitarian assistance/disaster response

professional exchange occurred between U.S. Navy medical staff and local health professionals."

After two British tourists staying at a Danang hotel tested positive for the virus March 7, U.S. officials identified 39 sailors who had visited the hotel, Vasquez said. All were screened and tested by Vietnamese officials and then placed in 14-day quarantine on the Roosevelt.

Professional exchanges and tours scheduled for March 8 were canceled and liberty was curtailed. Both ships left the next day.

None of the 39 sailors tested positive for the virus during the quarantine, but 15 days after leaving Danang, three other Roosevelt sailors — none of whom were connected to the pair of tourists or the hotel — tested positive, Vasquez said. No USS Bunker Hill sailor tested positive during that same time frame, he said.

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Boeing lost 150 jet orders as travel bookings plunged

By JULIE JOHNSON
Bloomberg

Boeing lost orders for 150 of its beleaguered 737 Max aircraft last month as travel bookings plunged because of the Covid-19 pandemic, squeezing airlines and aircraft lessors.

Half the cancellations were previously announced by Avolon Holdings Ltd., the world's No. 3 jet lessor. In addition, Brazil's Gol Linhas Aereas Inteligentes trimmed 34 planes from an earlier deal. Smartwings Slovakia SRO scrapped orders for five aircraft, while unidentified customers opted out of 35 sales of the Max, which has been grounded for more than year after two fatal crashes.

The tally, along with results posted by Airbus, provide the first glimpse of the toll on the manufacturers from an unprecedented halt to air travel as borders closed, non-critical businesses shuttered and consumers were ordered to head indoors. The International Air Travel Association, an airline trade group, estimated that carriers will lose \$314 billion this year because of the outbreak, a 25% jump from its previous forecast.

While Boeing still has unfilled orders for 5,049 planes, "given Covid-19 pressures, additional deferrals/cancellations are likely in coming months," Cowen analyst Cai von Rumohr said in a note to clients Tuesday.

Boeing's order book for the Max is shrinking as the plane-maker works with global regulators to clear its best-selling jetliner to resume commercial flight by midyear. The company couldn't face worse timing for the comeback effort, with airlines that until recently had clamored for the single-aisle aircraft now fighting their financial lives.

The planemaker suspended output of the Max in January and plans to slowly restart manufacturing soon to stress-test its supply chain and avoid flooding the market with uneeded planes. The long grounding may have an unexpected benefit for some cash-strapped customers. If they exercise a clause that allows them to walk away from an order after a 12-month delay, Boeing is typically obligated to refund any advance payments.

"We are working closely with our customers, many of whom are facing significant financial pressures, to review their fleet plans and make adjustments where appropriate," Boeing said in a statement Tuesday. "At the same time, Boeing continues to adjust its order book to adapt to lower-than-planned 737 Max

production in the near term."

In all, the backlog of 737 orders shrank by 314 jets in the first quarter, according to Boeing's website. Of those, 191 were sales canceled or converted into orders for other jets made by the company. Another 141 were taken off the books under an accounting measure aimed at measuring impaired orders, although the contracts remain intact. Also, Boeing won 18 orders for a military version of the 737.

While demand for twin-aisle aircraft has been particularly hard hit as the viral outbreak saps long-range travel demand, Boeing still managed to garner 29 orders for its carbon-fiber 787 Dreamliner in the first quarter. That included 12 firm sales to Japan's All Nippon Airways last month.

Boeing recorded 49 total orders in the first quarter and 50 deliveries. The Chicago-based company said "logistical challenges" continue to hamper shipments, with customers unable to visit the U.S. to take ownership because of the travel restrictions.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Military clinics in Europe now have rapid testing

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — At least seven U.S. military medical clinics in Europe now have an in-house diagnostic tool that processes coronavirus tests in as little as 45 minutes, officials said this week.

Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the SHAPE Army Health Clinic in Belgium and the Vicenza Army Health Clinic in Italy are the first Army hospitals in

Europe to begin using the tool, which was authorized last month by the Food and Drug Administration for use during the global coronavirus emergency.

The Navy hospitals in Rota, Spain, and Naples, Italy, and the Air Force clinics at Lakenheath in England and Aviano in Italy, are also receiving or already using the new diagnostic tool developed by Utah-based BioFire Defense.

LRMCC has processed 50 tests using the new system; SHAPE

has processed nine and Vicenza has processed four, said Col. Pete Bowden, LRMCC deputy commander for patient services.

"The new system gives our other Army Health Clinics more options," Bowden said. "[It] can process a testing sample in about an hour, so it can be used to test patients with worsening symptoms to help the clinician rule out co-infection with influenza, which would affect how the patient is treated."

Bowden said LRMCC will contin-

ue to process tests conventionally, in batches, when large numbers of people must be tested.

Since testing began, military clinics in Europe have sent tests to host-nation labs, to LRMCC or to the U.S. for processing.

"The in-house testing capability cut what was a 3- to 7-day result process to a less than 24-hour result," Lt. Col. Shawn McFarland, 48th Surgical Operations Squadron commander at RAF Lakenheath, said last week. Lakenheath began using the new sys-

tem March 30.

BioFire worked with the Defense Department to develop the diagnostic test, which detects a substance found in the DNA of the coronavirus. The system can only be used in authorized laboratories as long as the FDA emergency authorization for coronavirus diagnostic tools is in place, a March 23 letter to BioFire from the FDA said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Brian Ferguson contributed to this story. svan.jennifer@stripes.com
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'Arduous and tough' times for military medical personnel

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Workdays for the military medical personnel overseeing the Jacob Javits Convention Center in Manhattan begin at about 5 a.m., where about 200 military and civilian nurses prepare for a 12-hour shift caring for coronavirus patients, said Army Lt. Col. Leslie Curtis, chief nursing officer of the 9th Field Hospital, which is deployed to New York City from Fort Hood, Texas.

"We have very strict protocol ... to protect every single person," Curtis said Tuesday. "We are extremely busy."

The center averages about 325 coronavirus patients a day in the 2,500-bed facility. The staff — a joint force of Army, Navy, Air Force and civilian personnel — sees about 125 new patients each day and about 40 to 50 discharges.

Military personnel have been in New York City for about two weeks in response to the coronavirus outbreak. The city has been the U.S. epicenter of the pandemic with more than 106,800 coronavirus cases as of Tuesday. Nationwide, there are more than 610,000 cases, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center. The virus has killed more than 25,000 Americans.

The pooling of forces at the Javits Center is unique, Curtis said. "This is an extraordinary time in history to come together with all services providing care in an arduous and tough situation," she said.

New medical personnel is routinely joining the effort at the center — about 20 to 30 a day — who must be processed and credentialed, Curtis said. Many of them watch for a day before they are added to the facility's work schedule. In two weeks, the nursing staff has expanded from 12 teams to 27 teams working shifts around the clock.

U.S. Northern Command is overseeing more than 13,200 active-duty and Reserve service members deployed in at least seven states in response to the coronavirus pandemic. More people are added every day. On Friday, the Army Reserve announced eight medical task forces to deploy to New York, New



BARRY RILEY/U.S. Navy

Medical providers assigned to Javits New York Medical Station rush a critically-ill patient to an intensive care room Saturday.

Navy removes 116 staffers from hospital ship

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Navy has removed 116 medical staff members from its hospital ship docked off Los Angeles after seven of them tested positive for COVID-19, an official said Tuesday.

The personnel from the USNS Mercy were taken to a nearby base and remain under quarantine. None so far has needed hospitalization, said Lt. Rochelle Rieger of the 3rd Fleet. Rieger initially said that 126 medical crew members were taken off the ship but later corrected the number to 116.

It's unclear where or how the

sailors became infected, Rieger said.

The ship left San Diego on March 23 when all were screened before they boarded, Rieger said. It arrived to Los Angeles four days later to provide relief to the city amid the pandemic by accepting patients from hospitals who were not infected with the virus.

None of the more than 1,000 personnel aboard were allowed to leave the ship once it departed San Diego.

The first case emerged last week as the ship was preparing to receive elderly patients from skilled nursing facilities in Los

Angeles to protect them from being exposed to the virus.

So far the ship, with 1,000 beds, has taken in only 20 patients from hospitals and none have tested positive for the virus or showed any symptoms of the illness, Rieger said. Two medical personnel from the ship who tested positive came in close contact with a small number of the patients, but they were wearing full protective gear including gloves, N95 masks and eye goggles.

The removal of the 116 crew members will not affect the ship's ability to treat patients, Rieger said.

Friday, according to Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, and expects to have about 250 patients transferred to the facility by the end of the week.

Meanwhile, the majority of military personnel are concentrated in New York City.

More than 400 military personnel are working inside 11 New York hospitals, some of them functioning as their own teams within intensive care units while others are filling in personnel gaps among civilian providers as needed, said Navy Capt. Joe Kochan, executive officer for the Operational Health Support Unit Portsmouth, a Navy Reserve unit based at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Va. Kochan deployed to New York City, working primarily in Elmhurst Hospital.

Military support varies in each hospital based on whatever the facility needs to relieve their own personnel, who have been in this fight against the virus for about 35 to 45 days, he said.

Air Force Col. Jennifer Ratcliff, commander of the 927th Aerospace Medical Squadron from MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., said that once her personnel received credentials, military teams quickly integrated themselves into New York's hospitals.

"We're a fresh face. We've got the energy and enthusiasm to really help these people who are tired and have been working very long days and weeks," she said.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Tuesday that there are some good signs that coronavirus cases are beginning to plateau in the state and hospitalizations are beginning to level.

As the state and local government respond to the changing curve of the virus, Curtis said that the military personnel at the Javits Center will evolve to meet the needs of the community. Staffers are prepared to meet any need.

"They have the [personal protective equipment] they need," she said. "They have everything we can think of to make it easier to do the job they are doing."

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Jersey and Connecticut. As of Tuesday, three medical units were announced to support efforts in Michigan and Massachusetts.

The troops are in addition to the more than 30,000 National Guard members working in communities in all U.S. states and territories, according to the National Guard Bureau.

Other cities receiving relief efforts include Edison and Newark,

N.J., Stamford, Conn., Boston and Detroit. Each of these cities received at least one 85-member Army Reserve Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force consisting of respiratory specialists, infectious disease specialists, doctors, nurses, medics and behavioral health specialists, according to Army North officials.

One team deployed to Detroit on Friday and began seeing patients

Sunday at a 1,000-bed alternate care facility built by the Federal Emergency Management Agency inside the TCF Center.

Detroit is considered a potential future hotspot for the coronavirus, and so far it has more than 6,700 confirmed cases of the virus. The state has more than 26,000 cases, according to the governor's office.

The alternate care site opened

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Travel: Pentagon hopes to drastically expand ability to test troops

FROM FRONT PAGE

Service members and their families have been barred from all official domestic travel, including permanent change-of-station moves, since Esper's first stop-movement order was issued March 16. On March 25, the defense secretary extended those restrictions to all overseas personnel as well.

Esper's decision to lengthen the orders comes as confirmed coronavirus cases among American troops worldwide surpassed 3,000 on Tuesday, according to Pentagon data. Cases of the fast-spreading virus that has paralyzed movement in the U.S. and dozens of other countries continued to climb within the U.S. military as it works to expand testing.

In addition to the 3,022 U.S. service members who had tested positive for the coronavirus, including two who died from complications caused by the disease, another 1,474 DOD civilian workers, contractors and military dependents had been diagnosed with the virus, the Pentagon said. That tally included 14 deaths among those nonuniformed, DOD-affiliated individuals.

Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Tuesday that the Pentagon is looking to drastically expand its ability to test troops. The Defense Department now has the capability to conduct about 8,700 tests each day, but Milley wants to see that expand to 65,000 per day within 45 days.

"Our desire, our determination is to expand testing, especially for the 10 states we're probably be in tighter quarters — [submarine] crews, bomber crews, basic trainees, things like that," Milley

‘Our determination is to expand testing, especially for groups that are going to probably be in tighter quarters — [submarine] crews, bomber crews, basic trainees ...’

Army Gen. Mark Milley
chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

said alongside Esper. "Hopefully we'll get after that here in the next 45 days — rapidly increasing the amount of testing."

The military has learned a great deal about the virus from its largest outbreak aboard the now-sidelined nuclear aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, Milley said. That outbreak has seen more than 600 sailors test positive for the virus in the weeks since the first case was reported March 14.

But among those cases, only 213 coronavirus-infected sailors have displayed any symptoms of the disease, Milley said. Five of the ship's sailors are now hospitalized and one died Monday of complications of the virus, Navy officials said.

The military has tested about 93% of the Roosevelt's nearly 5,000 crew members, the Navy said.

The presence of so many asymptomatic carriers of the virus has convinced senior Pentagon



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Defense Secretary Mark Esper speaks about the coronavirus earlier this month in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House in Washington.

leaders that it would be useful to test more than just those suspected of having the disease.

Milley said that it would include service members in the nation's most elite special operations units and others responsible for nuclear weapons.

It also could include units preparing to deploy, if they are approved to move out despite the travel-halting orders.

Esper said that the next iteration of the stop-movement order would be somewhat modified to direct more clearly which individuals should be exempted from the policy.

The initial orders allowed service members to move to their next assignments only if they could convince top leaders that they faced substantial hardships if they did not move immediately.

Esper did not provide specific examples of the modifications that he would include.

The defense secretary said, however, that travel restrictions and other measures implemented to mitigate the virus' impacts would be reviewed every 15 days.

That will allow him "to see if we can curtail it sooner or if we need to extend it further," he said.

Top defense officials have said that internal tracking has suggested the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S. could extend into the summer months. Gen. David Goldfein, the Air Force chief of staff, said that he expected the stop-movement orders would be extended into July.

"June seems to be about where we're going to level, and then July and August look to be — potentially — recovery months," Goldfein said April 6. "I could be totally off, but that's what we're planning for right now."

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VA hospitals expand care by treating 135 non-veteran virus patients

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs is helping 10 states wage their coronavirus response efforts by opening bed space for non-veteran patients and sending VA medical staff to private facilities.

As of this week, VA hospitals are treating 135 non-veteran patients in Albuquerque, N.M., Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich., New York and New Jersey, the department said. In addition, 44 non-veteran patients in those states have been treated and discharged from VA care, and six others have died.

Though the department announced Tuesday it was expanding its assistance to non-veterans, the VA has insisted that veterans will continue to come first.

Coronavirus deaths among veteran patients grew from 200 Friday to 257 Tuesday, with the most deaths in Brooklyn and New Orleans. Positive cases of the virus among VA patients nationwide hit 4,261 on Tuesday, about one month after the VA recorded its first two cases on March 12.

Among VA employees, there were 1,530 positive cases Tuesday. Thirteen workers had died from the virus, up from nine Friday.

"VA is committed to helping transition in this effort to combat COVID-19," VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a statement.

In addition to providing medical care for the more than 9 million veterans, distributing benefits and operating national veterans' cemeteries, the VA has a fourth mission — to provide emergency medical care to all Americans in times of crises. After pleas from lawmakers, the VA started that mission at the end of March when it opened bed space for non-veterans in New York City, which became the epicenter of the pandemic.

As the virus spread, more states submitted requests for the VA's help. The requests go through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Wilkie said last week that his department would make 1,500 beds available for FEMA's use.

In New York City, the VA was treating 80 non-veteran patients as of Tuesday, and 30 others had

been discharged. Five patients died. In New Jersey, the VA was treating 24 non-veterans. Six had been discharged, and one patient died.

Between Ann Arbor and Detroit, the VA was treating 27 non-veterans in Michigan. Four non-veterans were being treated at the Albuquerque VA.

The VA said that it had accepted new assignments from FEMA to care for non-veterans in Illinois and Louisiana. The department opened 18 beds at the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center in Shreveport, La., and it opened 35 beds for non-veterans in Chicago, Hines and Marion, Ill.

The VA hospital in Providence, R.I., treated residents of a local nursing home who had contracted the virus. Six of the patients were transferred back to the nursing home, and one patient died.

Nursing homes in Massachusetts have also experienced outbreaks of the virus. A dozen VA medical staff from the Bedford, Mass., VA went to the Hunt Nursing Home in Danvers, Mass., and the Charwell Nursing Home in Norwood, Mass., to help with re-

sponse efforts.

The VA also sent a mobile pharmacy and two staff members to suburban Detroit, where the Army Corps of Engineers is establishing a field hospital.

In New Haven, Conn., three VA medical staff were sent on a state assignment to aid the homeless population.

The VA agency has continued to face backlash about its shortage of personal protective equipment for medical staff. One federal union filed a complaint with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, criticizing the

VA for creating an unsafe working environment.

Though the VA has not shared the job titles of its employees who have died from coronavirus, the department said Tuesday that three of the 13 had jobs in which they directly cared for patients.

The employees worked at VA hospitals in Ann Arbor, Detroit, Indianapolis, Houston, Shreveport, the Bronx, Manhattan, West Palm Beach, Calif., Denver and Los Angeles. Three worked in Reno, Nev.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK



ROBERT WILLETT, THE (RALEIGH, N.C.) NEWS & OBSERVER/AP

Police arrest a woman who was told several times to disperse from a gathering of protesters calling on Gov. Roy Cooper to reopen North Carolina, amid concerns of economic fallout from his coronavirus-driven stay-at-home order, Tuesday in Raleigh.

In nod to governors, Trump walks back authority claim

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said he's open to some states "re-opening" before federal social distancing guidelines expire at the end of month, as he appeared to back off his claim of absolute authority to decide when the time was right to act.

Hours after suggesting that the bipartisan concerns of governors about his assertion of power would amount to an insurrection, Trump abruptly reversed course Tuesday, saying he would leave it to governors to determine when and how to revive activity in their states. He said he likely would discuss his plans with governors on Thursday.

"The governors are responsible," Trump said. "They have to take charge."

Still, he insisted, "The governors will be very, very respectful of the presidency."

Democratic and Republican governors had objected after Trump asserted Monday that he alone would determine when and how to reopen the economy, despite clear constitutional limitations on federal powers.

Trump said Tuesday he would authorize governors "of each individual state to implement a reopening — and a very powerful reopening — plan of their state at a time and in a manner as most appropriate." Trump added that he would support moves by states that haven't been hit hard

by the outbreak to ease restrictions even before federal guidelines on social distancing expire April 30.

Trump said the country would open up "in beautiful little pieces," adding that some states with low rates of infection "have fewer people and they have lots of room."

It's unclear if any states are actively considering reopening their economies before May 1.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert, told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the country is "not there yet" when it comes to the kind of testing and tracing needed for the economy to reopen. But Trump made clear Tuesday he is intent on proceeding with his plans.

Trump outlined a vision in which workers would be tested, perhaps weekly, and governors would test travelers arriving at their states' borders. But the U.S. is nowhere near having that kind of infrastructure, with testing still largely reserved for those with serious symptoms and results taking days to learn.

In expressing an openness to states setting their own timelines, Trump was largely acknowledging the authority governors have already exercised. While Trump has issued national recommendations advising people to stay home, governors and local leaders are the ones who ordered schools and nonessential business to close.

Calif. governor: Schools will look very different when they reopen

By JOCELYN GECKER

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Staggered school start times. Class sizes cut in half. Social distancing in the hallways and cafeteria. These are a few of the possible scenarios for California schools that Gov. Gavin Newsom laid out as part of a road map for reopening the state amid the coronavirus.

The timeline for reopening schools remains unclear, as it does for reopening California society at large. But Newsom said Tuesday that when the state's 6 million students do return, things will look dramatically different.

"We need to get our kids back to school," Newsom said. "And we need to do it in a

safe way."

The outline he presented for what it will take to lift coronavirus restrictions in the nation's most populous state asked more questions than it answered. He sought to temper the expectations of a restless, isolated public.

For schools, the biggest challenge of officials will face is how to continue physical distancing among children and adults to ensure that "kids aren't going to school, getting infected and then infecting grandma and grandpa," Newsom said.

That could mean requiring schools to stagger schedules, with some students arriving in the morning and the rest in the afternoon. In the coming weeks and months, officials along with educators and unions

Some get relief funds; economic woes shown

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Government relief checks began arriving in Americans' bank accounts as the economic damage to the U.S. from the coronavirus piled up Wednesday and the reopening of businesses in Europe and China made it clear that things won't necessarily bounce right back when the crisis eases.

With lockdowns and closings bringing factories and other businesses to a standstill, half American industrial output shriveled in March, registering its biggest decline since the U.S. demobilized in 1946 at the end of World War II. And retail sales fell by an unprecedented 8.7%, with April expected to be far worse.

The government this week began issuing one-time payments as part of its \$2.2 trillion coronavirus relief package, with adults receiving checks of up to \$1,200 each and \$500 per child to help households make the rent or cover other bills. The checks will be directly deposited into bank accounts or mailed to households, depending on how they filed their tax returns in the past.

Meanwhile, the first steps in lifting the economically crippling restrictions in other parts of the world are running into resistance, with shoppers and other customers staying away from the reopened businesses and workers afraid the newly restored freedoms could put their health at risk.

In China, millions are still wary of spending much or even going out. Some cities have resorted to handing out shopping vouchers and trying to reassure consumers by showing officials in state media eating in restaurants.

"I put off plans to change cars and spend almost nothing on eating out or entertainment," said Zhang Hu, a truck salesman in Zhengzhou who has gone back to work but has seen his income plummet because few people are looking to buy 20-ton rigs. "I have no idea when the situation will turn better."

In Austria, Marie Froehlich, who owns a clothing store in downtown Vienna, said her staff was happy to get back to work after weeks of being cooped up at home. But with her business dependent largely on tourism, which has dried up amid the travel restrictions, she expects it will take months to return to normal.

"Until then, we are in crisis mode," she said.

Worldwide, deaths have topped 128,000 and confirmed infections have surpassed 2 million, according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. The figures understate the true size of the crisis, in part because of limited testing, different ways of counting the dead, and concealment by some governments.

The U.S. has by far been the hardest-hit country, with more than 26,000 deaths and over 600,000 confirmed infections, by Johns Hopkins' count. Still, nightmare scenarios projecting a far greater number of deaths and hospitalizations have not come to pass, raising hopes from coast to coast.

At the same time, the economic damage from the effort to "flatten the curve" of infections has mounted alarmingly.

Signifying a huge shift in consumer behavior, grocery store sales in the U.S. jumped nearly 26% as Americans stocked up on food and consumer goods to ride out the crisis, while auto sales plummeted by one-quarter and clothing store sales slid by more than half, the government reported. The category that mostly includes online shopping rose more than 3%.

"With clear signs of panic buying of necessities and the fact that lockdowns were introduced only around the middle of the month means that far worse is to come in April and the second quarter more generally," said Michael Pearce, an economist at the consulting firm Capital Economics.

U.S. manufacturing output by the world's biggest economy dropped 6.3% last month, led by plunging production at auto factories, which have shut down entirely.

President Donald Trump has been anxious to lift stay-at-home orders and business shutdowns in the U.S. But those aspirations continue to meet stiff resistance on the state and local levels.

The European Union published a 16-page road map plotting a united course out of the crisis for the 27 nations, warning that "any level of gradual relaxation of the confinement will unavoidably lead to a corresponding increase in new cases."

Foreign leaders, meanwhile, rushed to the defense of the World Health Organization after Trump vowed to cut off payments to the U.N. agency for not sounding the alarm over the virus sooner. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the WHO is now "needed more than ever" to combat the outbreak.

"Only by joining forces can we overcome this crisis that knows no borders," he said.

will be discussing that idea and other possibilities for keeping campuses safe, he said.

School assemblies, gym class, recess, lunchtime and all scenarios in which students gather in large groups will have to be rethought. School maintenance will need to be overhauled.

"We are entering a new era of education. And whether that's transitional or whether it portends a more permanent change in how we educate students is unclear," said Troy Flint, spokesman for the California School Boards Association.

Flint said the governor's idea of staggering class times would help guide the conversations school districts are having about how to safely reopen.

"Do you need to move to an expanded school day, or school week, or consider weekend classes? Do you need to look at a year-round model?" said Flint.

Education funding cutbacks have already led to teacher shortages and made campus nurses rare, raising questions about how officials might cope with extended days and ensure kids are healthy, said Tony Wold, associate superintendent of the West Contra Costa Unified School District, which includes 55 schools.

"We can't just build new schools overnight. Even if the state gives us more money, where will the teachers come from?" said Wold. "This is probably the most Herculean challenge I have ever seen in public education."

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Wash. state officials: Masks will likely be needed for months

From wire reports

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Even once the broad restrictions currently in place in Washington state in response to the coronavirus are lifted, health officials said Tuesday that for months to come the “new normal” will continue to look a lot like daily life does now: teleworking, physical distancing and use of masks in public.

Health Secretary John Wiesman said because the virus won’t be able to be stopped or contained until there are treatments and a vaccine, the goal is to make sure that once the state starts to see a decline of cases, “that we do our best not to spring back.”

“How we go about our daily lives, we’re not going to return to what we knew before COVID-19 for many, many months,” he said. “It’s going to be a new normal, one that is much more aware of safety and biosecurity.”

More than 10,500 people in Washington state have tested positive for the virus and at least 516 have died.

Washington state’s stay-at-home order, which has already been extended once, is currently in place through May 4, though Gov. Jay Inslee has warned that it is possible the order may have to be extended once again.

Wiesman said that while debates on how the order will be lifted are still being worked out, there will probably be partial easing of some of the restrictions, including possibly businesses opening with reduced occupancy so that social distancing can be maintained.

Alaska

JUNEAU — The state plans to lift restrictions on elective medical procedures in what Gov. Mike Dunleavy described Tuesday as an initial step toward reopening the economy.

State officials said last week updated a mandate requiring non-urgent or elective procedures be canceled or postponed for three months. The update included surgical infection under a section of surgeries that “could be delayed for a few weeks,” but made an exception if the woman’s life or physical health was endangered.

Some saw the inclusion of abortion in the list as political. The mandate stated the overall goal was to preserve protective equipment for health care workers and patient care supplies; ensure staff and patient safety and expand available hospital capacity.

Alabama

MONTGOMERY — An Alabama school district said it would be deploying school buses begin-

ning Wednesday to provide Wi-Fi hot spots to students in need of internet access.

Montgomery Public Schools said six buses would be parked around town, allowing students to get connected while learning remotely due to the coronavirus pandemic, news outlets reported.

Most of the buses were expected to be available in various locations from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. The district said it had 11 buses capable of providing Wi-Fi.

California

SACRAMENTO — California regulators will try again to convene an online public meeting to discuss a potential limited ban on freshwater fishing during the coronavirus pandemic after last week’s teleconference was canceled when it became overwhelmed by hundreds of callers.

The state Fish and Game Commission on Wednesday will consider emergency closures of some California rivers, streams and lakes at the request of local officials concerned that visiting anglers might spread the virus.

Rumors circulated last week on social media that the commission was considering shutting down all freshwater fishing in California. That led to a crush of people trying to join the April 9 meeting.

Florida

TAMPA — A Florida inmate who was among those released last month in an effort to contain the coronavirus has been arrested on a murder charge, sheriff’s officials said.

Joseph Edward Williams, 26, was arrested Monday on a second-degree murder charge in connection with a fatal shooting March 20, according to the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office. He’s also charged with resisting an officer, being a felon in possession of a firearm and possession of heroin, records show.

Williams was among a group of inmates released from the jail in an effort to prevent the spread of coronavirus throughout the facility.

On March 19, Hillsborough County Sheriff Chad Chronister said in a news release that 164 county jail inmates accused of low level crimes had been released.

The next night, deputies received 911 calls about gunshots in a neighborhood. When they arrived, they found a man who had been fatally shot, sheriff’s officials said.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii officials Tuesday acknowledged progress in slowing the spread of coronavirus in the islands yet



JOHN MINCHILLA/AP

Attending physician Mollie Williams takes a selfie with firefighters who arrived to applaud medical workers at 7 p.m. outside Brooklyn Hospital Center on Tuesday in New York.

warned against complacency as they disclosed the existence of a cluster of 12 cases connected to a McDonald’s worker on the Big Island.

Hawaii has a recorded 517 cases of COVID-19, including nine new cases in the islands and four cases of Hawaii residents diagnosed out of state. This comes after the state had just five cases Monday.

Lt. Gov. Josh Green and other officials urged the public not to become overconfident and to continue to obey Gov. David Ige’s stay-at-home order, which is in effect through April 30.

Officials underscored the infectious nature of the virus with the news that an employee at a McDonald’s in Kona spread the virus to seven coworkers. Two of the workers then infected a total of five family members. The cluster was spread across two McDonald’s locations, one at Kona Commons and the other at Walmart in Kailua-Kona.

All of those who tested positive were placed in quarantine, as were those who were exposed.

Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois has paid \$174 million for medicine and protective equipment to slow the spread of COVID-19 in the past month, according to data released Tuesday.

Comptroller Susana Mendoza debuted an online portal identifying each expenditure since Gov. J.B. Pritzker’s March 9 disaster declaration, which allows his administration to coordinate with state partners and federal agencies in buying equipment and supplies.

As of Tuesday, 868 people had died of complications related to COVID-19 among 23,247 cases of coronavirus infections since the pandemic hit Illinois.

Mendoza said that despite the state’s billions of dollars of debt,

she will prioritize COVID-19 response payments for the duration of the pandemic.

Pritzker reported that analysis of Illinois’ COVID-19 statistics suggests that cases might have plateaued and might be declining because of social-distancing and other strategies. He reiterated that he is consulting other governors about how to relax such restrictions.

Kansas

TOPEKA — The Kansas Supreme Court on Tuesday night canceled arguments from attorneys over a civil rights’ group attempt to force the state to release prison inmates with pre-existing medical conditions making them vulnerable to the novel coronavirus.

The high court’s actions came with arguments originally set for Wednesday afternoon in a lawsuit filed last week by the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas for seven inmates at state prisons in Ellsworth, Lansing and Topeka.

The lawsuit argues that the inmates are housed in crowded conditions with limited access to adequate medical care. It also contended that releasing vulnerable inmates would allow proper social distancing and reduce the virus’ transmission among remaining prisoners.

But lawyers for the Department of Corrections and Attorney General Derek Schmidt’s office on Tuesday filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit, and Justice Marla Luckert’s order said the state’s response showed “there are significant issues of fact” that should be settled in district court.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts is launching an effort to reach everyone in the state who may have the coronavirus and get them tested and into

isolation or treatment if needed.

The ambitious goal is to stop — not just slow — the destructive power of COVID-19 through the tedious, yet powerful public health tool called contact tracing.

Contact tracing starts with a call to someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus, and then follow-up with everyone that person was in close contact with — family, friends, colleagues or others they got closer than 6 feet from for more than a brief encounter. Everyone on that list is interviewed about their contacts and symptoms.

This is a routine, resource-intensive public health strategy that’s been successfully used in the U.S. and around the world to contain infectious disease outbreaks — from measles to smallpox to tuberculosis to Ebola and more.

The state is partnering with the Boston-based nonprofit Partners in Health, and has begun hiring and training some of the 1,000, or so, people who will call everyone who tests positive.

Tennessee

NASHVILLE — Tennessee’s state parks will remain closed due to the ongoing threat of the coronavirus.

The announcement Tuesday by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation keeps the 56 parks closed past the previously announced April 14 date to end the closures.

State officials have not set a new date to reopen the parks at this time, saying they will closely monitor the pandemic and will notify the public when parks reopen.

The department says the closure occurred because state parks saw staggering increases in visitor traffic, including from out-of-state visitors, making social distancing difficult.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

China didn't warn public for six key days

Associated Press

In the six days after top Chinese officials secretly determined that they likely were facing a pandemic from a new coronavirus, the city of Wuhan at the epicenter of the disease hosted a mass banquet for tens of thousands of people, while millions also began traveling through for Lunar New Year celebrations.

President Xi Jinping warned the public on the seventh day, Jan. 20. But by then, more than 3,000 people had been infected during almost a week of public silence, according to internal documents obtained by The Associated Press and estimates based on retrospective infection data.

The delay from Jan. 14 to Jan. 20 was neither the first mistake made by Chinese officials at all levels in confronting the outbreak nor the longest lag, as governments around the world have dragged their feet for weeks and even months in addressing the virus.

But the delay by the first country to face the coronavirus came at a critical time — the beginning of the outbreak. China's attempt to walk a line between alerting the public and avoiding panic set the stage for a pandemic that has infected almost 2 million people and taken more than 126,000 lives.

"This is tremendous," said Zou-Fen Zhang, an epidemiologist at the University of California, Los Angeles. "If they took action six days earlier, there would have been much fewer patients and medical facilities would have been sufficient."

Another epidemiologist, Benjamin Cowley at the University of Hong Kong, however, noted that it may have been a tricky call. If health officials raise the alarm prematurely, it can damage their credibility — "like crying wolf" — and may cripple their ability to mobilize the public, he said.

The six-day delay by China's leaders in Beijing came on top of almost two weeks during which the national Center for Disease Control did not register any new cases, internal bulletins obtained by the AP confirmed. Yet during that time, from Jan. 5 to Jan. 17, hundreds of patients were appearing in hospitals not just in Wuhan



NO HAN GUAN/AP

A child takes a COVID-19 test at a quarantine hotel in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.

— which finally reopened last week — but across the country.

China's rigid controls on information, bureaucratic hurdles and a reluctance to send bad news up the chain of command muffled early warnings, experts said. Without these internal reports, it took the first case outside China, in Thailand on Jan. 13, to galvanize leaders in Beijing into recognizing the possible pandemic before them.

The Chinese government has repeatedly denied suppressing information in the early days, saying that it immediately reported the outbreak to the World Health Organization.

"Allegations of a cover-up or lack of transparency in China are groundless," said foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian at a Thursday press conference.

The documents show that the head of China's National Health Commission, Ma Xiaowei, laid out a grim assessment of the situation in a confidential Jan. 14 teleconference with provincial health officials. A memo stated that the teleconference was held to convey instructions on the coronavirus from President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Keqiang and

Vice Premier Sun Chunlan, but does not specify what those instructions were.

"The epidemic situation is still severe and complex, the most severe challenge since SARS in 2003, and is likely to develop into a major public health event," the memo cited Ma as saying.

In a faxed statement, the National Health Commission said that China had published information on the outbreak in an "open, transparent, responsible and timely manner," in accordance with "important instructions" repeatedly issued by President Xi.

The documents come from an anonymous source in the medical field who did not want to be named for fear of retribution. The AP confirmed the contents with two other sources in public health familiar with the teleconference.

Under a section titled "sober understanding of the situation," the memo singled out the case in Thailand, saying that the situation had "changed significantly" because of the possible spread of the virus abroad.

"All localities must prepare for and respond to a pandemic," it said.

The National Health Commis-

sion distributed a 63-page set of instructions to provincial health officials, obtained by the AP. The instructions, marked "not to be publicly disclosed," ordered doctors and nurses nationwide to don protective gear, health officials to identify suspected cases and hospitals to open fever clinics.

In public, however, officials continued to downplay the threat.

"The risk of sustained human-to-human transmission is low," Li Qun, the head of the China CDC's emergency center, told Chinese state television on Jan. 15.

Under the new orders, officials in Wuhan and elsewhere finally got CDC-approved testing kits and a green light to start confirming new cases on Jan. 16. Across the country, dozens of reported cases then began to surface, in some cases among patients who were infected earlier but had not yet been tested.

On Jan. 20, President Xi issued his first public comments on the virus, saying the outbreak "must be taken seriously." A leading Chinese epidemiologist, Zhong Nanshan, announced for the first time that the virus was transmissible from person to person on national television.

The delay may support accusations by U.S. President Donald Trump that the Chinese government's secrecy held back the world's response to the virus. Even the public announcement on Jan. 20, however, left the U.S. nearly two months to prepare for the pandemic — time that the U.S. squandered.

Some health experts said that Beijing took decisive action given the information available to them.

"They may not have said the right thing, but they were doing the right thing," said Ray Yip, the retired founding head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's office in China. "On the 20th, they sounded the alarm for the whole country, which is not an unreasonable delay."

But others have said that an earlier warning would have saved lives. If the public had been warned a week earlier to practice social distancing, wear masks and cut back on travel, cases could have been cut by up to two-thirds, one paper later found.

"The earlier you act, the easier you can control the disease," said Zhang.

South Koreans vote in national election amid virus fears

By KIM TONG-HYUNG

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — In a surprisingly high turnout, millions of South Korean voters wore masks and moved slowly between lines of tape at polling stations on Wednesday to elect lawmakers in the shadows of the spreading coronavirus.

The government resisted calls to postpone the presidential elections billed as a midterm referendum on President Moon Jae-

in, who enters the final two years of his single five-year term grappling with a historic public health crisis that is unleashing massive economic shock.

While South Korea's electorate is deeply divided along ideological and generational lines and regional loyalties, recent surveys showed growing support for Moon and his liberal party, reflecting the public's approval of an aggressive test-and-quarantine program so far credited for lower fatality rates for the coronavirus

compared to China, Europe and North America.

Initial surveys of voters leaving the polls conducted by TV stations indicated that Moon's Democratic Party and a satellite party it created to win proportional representative seats would comfortably combine to make up a majority in the 300-seat National Assembly.

"We are going through difficult times, be the coronavirus and politics are two different things," said one voter, Lee Kum.

Another Seoul resident, Chung Eun-young, said that she arrived at her polling station just after 6 a.m. to avoid crowds.

"I was worried about the coronavirus," she said. "They checked my temperature and handed me gloves, but it wasn't as bothersome as I thought it would be. ... I don't like what we are going through, but I cast my ballot to prevent the wrong candidates from getting elected."

The long lines that snaked around public offices and schools

followed record-high participation in early voting held on Friday and Saturday, and defied expectations of low turnout to minimize social contact.

The National Election Commission said that 15.6 million people had voted as of 5 p.m. When combined with the 11.8 million who cast their ballots during early voting or by mail, the overall turnout was at 62.6%, the highest since a 60.6% turnout in the 2004 general election.

STARS AND STRIPES® MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

SHAPE American Middle School

The Roller Coaster life of a Military Child

Being a Military child, my life is interesting. My experience of a Military child begins in Maryland the year of 2006. I was born in Maryland and only lived there for a year, my family then moved to Hawaii for four years. During this time my father was deployed for a whole year to Iraq. I lived in Hawaii from the ages of two to six years old. I enjoyed my time there even though I was so young, I can still remember some memories from there. After Hawaii we had to move to Texas. I lived in Texas for three years, I then moved to Germany for another three years. I loved the time I lived in Germany. I made a lot of friends, played many sports, traveled all over to different countries. During this time my father was deployed again to Poland twice. After living in Germany I moved to South Carolina for one year. I didn't really make friends because I had no one to connect with since I am a military and the population there for the military was so low. I didn't mind not having many friends. After that one year in South Carolina I moved here to Belgium. I can say I enjoy my time here so far. I have friends, like the school but I have to live separate from my father because of my parents' jobs. This makes living here tough but I see my friends to him or her comes to see me and my mom.

Being a military child is tough, but it gives you many opportunities. When you constantly move around you can make many friends from all over and you can travel to different places. The one thing that's hard about being a military child is having to leave things behind. You eventually have to leave friends behind, and that makes the moving part tough. As many times I moved this part kind of grew on me. I got used to it because I knew that this was how being a military child is. I like being a military child though there are some cons to it but there are outstanding pros about it. You get to see all types of things some people don't get to see. My family makes sure that we take advantage of traveling since PCSing to Europe.

— Mikayla C

Navy Kid

Life as a military child is not good or bad. It is quite harsh sometimes because you have to leave your friends behind and maybe never see them again. One of the good things is you get to go to different places to swim like Greece, Croatia, Italy, France, Estonia, and even a quick place in an Dutch country canal. You might get to go skiing in the Alps... the German, the French, the Swiss or Italian Alps! I got to learn the Belgian way of playing soccer, which is basically rough and tough. You might have to learn difficult languages, like French, with S vowel accents which are annoying. You might have to go to boring places because your parents force you to go. You might have to learn to deal with many different cultures in an international school and that can sometimes be tiring. You might also make life-long friends. You might finish your time at a NATO base, with good friends, a new language, better soccer skills, and better understanding of cultures and end up as an enriched person.

— Wyatt

Great experience

Being a military child is fun and boring. If you are overseas, there's not much stuff to do. In the states there was a lot of stuff to do like amusement parks and restaurants and a bunch of other stuff. Overseas, all your parents want to do is explore or travel and take pictures. The schools overseas are much better than the schools in the states because you go to the same classes every day. In all honesty being a military is really fun and cool. You get a whole lot more experiences and experiments. You could travel Europe, learn history and learn at a higher rate than American schools. It is a great experience.

— Chris C

A kid named Tony

Once upon a time, there was a kid named Tony. Tony's dad worked for the military which meant that one day he would move away to a new home. Tony and his family lived in Spain, Tony had many

friends there and he liked his house. One day Tony's dad was told to go to Belgium for the next three years. Tony didn't want to go because he would miss his friends, but they had to go. When Tony made it to Belgium he was shy because he didn't know anybody there. After a few weeks, Tony started making friends and he was really happy because he liked his school and his new friends. Tony and his family were really happy and they were all together, just like in Spain. After three years Tony would have to say bye to his friend and go back to Spain. Tony was excited but also kind of sad because he would have to say bye to his friends but he would see his old friends again. When Tony and his family went back to Spain they would have to live differently than how they lived in Belgium, however, they were still happy together and they went back to living their old life.

— George F

We are proud!

I stay

My mom is a civilian. So, I get to stay in one place for a long time. It is fine because I get along with a lot of military children my age so I can fit right in with everyone.

I am the one that has to stay. When all of my friends are moving every 3 years. It is hard to be the one to have to just stay in one place.

I have always lived overseas in my life and never lived in the USA. So a lot of things that are normal to my friends are weird to me. Some main things are all of the fast food places everywhere and going to the store at midnight.

I never liked living overseas but it is ok at sometimes. You don't have to be the new kid. You have to see your friends leave and be the one to make new ones every three years.

— Declan M

Be thankful

If my name is Shearish, you might be asking: What is it like living as a military child? Living life as a military child isn't all that hard. There are some positives and negatives about being one, but honestly, I don't even find any negatives. Military children are just the same as civilian children, we just have little differences. Now you're going to get my view of what military children experience.

You move around a lot! The good thing about this, is that you get to see new places and live there for a few years! The only bad thing about moving is that you lose all your friends that you've made in the previous school. Sometimes you get tired of moving around so much, but you have to look on the bright side, meeting new friends is fun! You get to have privileges, since you're a military child, your school might be in a Military base unless you're in the States. You get stores like the Exchange or Commissary. Here in SHAPE, if you have an ID card, you get no taxes when buying groceries.

Since you move around, you obviously get to learn new languages. Learning new languages is fun, some people learn enough that they end up mastering it! When you learn these languages you can brag to your friends about how you can understand it. Now you know what it's like to be a military child. It's really fun, and I hope you think so too! Just know that you have to be thankful to the parents or adults for putting their lives on the line in order to protect you.

— Shearish C

So Much

I am a military child
I move from place to place
I leave my friends and family
I try to remember
The memories I have made
The people I have met
And the places I have been
Then I start all over again
New people
New place
New house

But being a military child is more than just moving to different places

The experience I have had
How lucky I am to see the places I've seen
And been to the places I've been
I have lived in many places
And have been to even more

But I've had to go months at a time with a military parent gone
Surviving us
Helping us

Seeing friends get hurt or worse
I'll sometimes lay in bed during those times and wonder
Will this trip be his last?
Will he get hurt?

Being a military child means so much
You get to do so much
You get to see so much
I love being a military child
I am a military child

— Sophie H

Easier than most

My experience of being a military child has been... Well, actually easier than most. My name is Orianna, and my mom has been in the military till I was about 6 years old. I remember her leaving for about 3-6 months to go on deployment. I don't really move that much, in fact, I've only moved twice. Once from Japan to Virginia, and now from Virginia to Belgium. It's really nice to be able to explore the world! Even though I still wish I was in Japan, it's okay because I've met many friends along the way of this journey!

There's a lot of fun things you can do because of the diverse cultures you are exposed to. One other thing is that you get to go to many places exclusive to military families. I love this place called the NEX navy exchange. In Virginia, it was huge! It was like a wonderland of software, skincare products, perfumes, beds, toys, candy, and just so much! Being a military child is tough, but I had it easy, and I'm glad I did! Hopefully other military children are not struggling too much. I hope this helps everyone understand what my personal experience was like.

— Orianna C

Turkish Military Child

Hello, my name is Yigit and I am from Turkey. My dad is working for the military and I am a special kid because of my dad. I get to see lots of places and meet so many nice people as I visit more places and that makes me lucky. Right now I am living in SHAPE (a NATO base in Belgium). First, let me tell you how it all started. Two years ago I was living in Cyprus and it was an ordinary sunny school day. I was on the school bus riding back home and I was tired after a long school day. I was talking to my friend who was sitting next to me as always. When I returned home my mom said she had a surprise for me. After dinner, she told me that we were moving to Belgium because of my dad's job. I was excited about going to Belgium. Most people are sad that they need to leave and say bye to their friends but I am not really like that. Do not get me wrong! I like having friends but I don't usually get sad when I am moving somewhere. Days have passed and finally, I was in SHAPE for the first time. The first two months were hard because I was learning another language to communicate but I have met nice people and I got used to this new place and now I like being in SHAPE. I should thank my dad because he was working all day and all night to pass a test that brought me to SHAPE.

— Yigit A

See more SHAPE American Middle School students' stories on next page.



Check out more military children stories at:
militarychild.stripes.com



Celebrating Month of the Military Child

SHAPE American Middle School

Pros and cons

Hello, my name is Jesse and I'm a military child. I'm going to tell you some pros and cons of being a military child. Here are some cons, you only have a few years to have friends before you move to another state or country. You have to go to a lot of other schools, and there is a chance your parent or parents might have to go to war. Here are some pros. You get to travel the world, you get to meet tons of new friends, and you get to meet people who speak different languages.

- Jesse T

positives and negatives

When you are a military child, you need to move around all the time but that has positives and negatives. The positives are that when you move around you get new friends, you gain new things and many more, but negatives are that you need to live in new places sometimes you don't know the language and you need to leave your friends behind. For example, I was living in Poland where I had a family, friends but I knew only one language. One day, my dad came and said that we are going to go to different places again but this time we are going to go to Belgium to a place known as SHAPE. I was scared and I was thinking "what if nobody will like me there?" What if I will never again see my friends, how many languages will I need to learn? Are they going to be hard? I was thinking that it is now very good here that I don't want to go back to Poland.

- Sebastian H

Exiting

Hello, my name is Moira. Being a military child definitely has its downsides, but it also can be great. My dad was a Lieutenant for the U.S. Navy, but is retiring. I have gone all around Europe and have seen so many amazing sights. I've gone to Ireland, France, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, and many other countries. Most of my life, I've lived in Europe and America, now I live in Belgium. The really sad thing about being a military child is that as soon as you really get to know someone new you have to leave again. My whole life, I have only lived in places for 3 years. I am quite used to it by now. I have made friends everywhere. I feel like I am very lucky to have lived where I've lived and seen what I've seen. I've met a lot of great people and have become quite flexible and resilient. There are perks to being a military child and downsides, but I realize that being in the military is for a good cause. Being a military child is definitely exiting.

- Moira O

Good cause

Hello, my name is Gavin and I'm a military child. Being a military child is fun, but can also be difficult sometimes. My mom is in the U.S. Air Force, right now my mom works for the gsm and she also helps people with problems they have. Being a military child is fun because you get to see the world and see how amazing the sights are in different countries, but it is also sad and difficult because you make friends but in 3-4 years you have to move and might never see your friends again. Right now I live in Belgium only 3 hours away from Paris. France. I've seen the Eiffel Tower 3 times and I've gone to the Louvre! I've seen the Mona Lisa's oil because where I'm from I bet 1/1000 people get to see the Mona Lisa and Eiffel Tower, so there are perks and there are downsides, but you just got to realize it's all for a good cause.

- Gavin P

An adventure

Belgium, the place of beer, chocolate, and waffles in that order. I PCS'd to Belgium in 2/19/2018, I have been here for 2 years now. My grandma is a captain in the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corp and she works at S.H.A.P.E where she helps with COVID-19 in Europe. We will live in Belgium for one more year until we move to Nebraska or Colorado Springs. A pro of being a military kid and going to Belgium is two words, S.H.A.P.E. is a place where you get to try foods from all the N.A.T.O countries and partner nations, as well as awesome amusement rides. Plus you get to attend our wonderful school S.H.A.P.E. American Middle School or SAMS for short.

- Elijah R

Transformation

Do you know how it is to be a military child? Well, I do. My dad is in the military and that makes my life completely different from a civilian's life. For me, it is not very fun to be a military person. I get to

travel a lot, but that means I have to move almost every 1-3 years and I don't have a choice where I move to. And nor do my parents. It might be a nice place or it might be a trashy city that you did not want to go to.

I know how it is to be a military child, and I think it is a bad experience. You move too many places. I have been to Savannah, Augusta, Hohenfels, Norfolk, Alexandria, and Belgium. But there are advantages. You have free time at night which, on non school nights, I use it in new houses that are sometimes useful things to watch tv and play video games when every body is asleep. But there are advantages. You have free time at night which, on non school nights, I get to watch TV and play video games when everyone else is asleep. I am a huge fan of Transformers so I also work on those during my free time.

- Noah L

My Life as a Military Child

Do you know what it is like to be a military child? I know, because I am one. Being a military child as its highs and its lows, but I am proud to be one. Even if sometimes you hate the city you moved to, or you are having trouble making friends, don't worry: We are military children, and we can do anything.



always find a way to make new ones. Three years ago, I moved from Italy (my home country) to Belgium. I think that it was the biggest change in my entire life because the other two times I moved it was in different places in Italy.

The thought of moving to a completely different place made me get goosebumps because I never actually went out of Italy. The first couple of months I lived here, I didn't like it at all. I was only every day to go to school because I didn't know English, and I didn't know how to make friends since I couldn't talk to them. Everything changed as I learned English: I made new friends, I understood what the teachers said, and I even stopped crying! This year, all my best friends are going to move back to their home country, and of course, I am going to miss them, but I hope that I will soon meet new friends.

In conclusion, being a military child can be hard, but I am really proud of what my dad does. In this dark moment, we are all sad and scared, but as military children, we are strong enough to fight off this situation, as we always do when we meet obstacles in our life. We are strong military kids!

- Alice G.

What it's like to be a military child

Do you know what it's like to be a military child? Well, I do because I am one. There are good things and bad things about being a military child. The good part is that you get to see many places, but the bad thing is that you have to move from the place you have made home. This is what I like and dislike about being a military child. A good thing is that I get to travel, and a lot. I've been to Italy, England, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Austria, Malta, the Netherlands and of course, my home country, Greece. I have seen many of places which others wish they could see, and have a lot of other places to see. I love seeing new things and other cultures, the characteristics and how people look are different in every country. But there is a bad thing too. I lived in Greece for about ten years, and when I found out that I had to go to Belgium I was okay with it, but then I figured that I would have to leave Greece, my best friend and my family. When I told my best friend for some reason I felt so heartbroken, and I know she knew and felt the same. I had to leave my home. But it wasn't harder for me, it was for my siblings. They knew their friends a lot more years than I knew mine. My sister's best friend was our cousin that is her age, and my brothers a boy I knew from when he was 3. My brother wasn't that sad but my sister was full of bitterness. When my sister came back from their last night together, she was bloody crying. She even made me cry because of her. But we came through, and there isn't one day that I don't think of my family and friends in Greece.

That's what I like and dislike for being a military child. It's always hard to leave someone so important behind, but I think what I don't leave? What if I weren't a military child? I would never have seen what I saw. What about you? Did you ever have any of these

opportunities? If yes, what are they? Do you think you would have those opportunities if you weren't a military kid?

- Lydia C

Adventure in life

Hello, my name is Kira and I'm a sort of German kid. Basically, I grew up in Belgium and not in Germany but I was born there. When we moved to Belgium I was two and my sister had just turned six, now she is in ninth grade. I was in the American school pretty much my entire life and I attended the German school for only one year. And I didn't really like it. Being a military child is not easy but not bad. It's ok because you get to see a lot of places but you move a lot too. We had the chance to stay here for about six and a half years. It was really nice and hard at the same time. You can make a lot of friends but if you have a really good friend they will go after three months which is really sad. There are these three people that I went to kindergarten with and after such a long time they are going to leave pretty soon. You can also learn a lot of languages from your friends. But in the end, you will always have something nice to think about if you want and at the same time, you are going to meet new people.

- Kira M

Another location

Living as a military brat has its advantages and disadvantages. Specifically, I enjoy three main advantages. I like being able to travel, make use of military facilities and be around so many foreign people. Being able to travel to military bases has its own view. There are discounts on nearly everything, stores are always open, and you can stay at luxurious hotels. You can enjoy exploring old tanks and e.t.o on campsites! The facilities at all military bases are top rate. Being able to access swimming pools five -ten minutes from your house is a real treat. Making use of 2-4 px express is useful for the midnight snackers and the morning coffee repairs. Did you know, overseas military bases are the only places to obtain root beer in some places? But there is something bad about this, your parents will not be on duty. Having so much people around you that are foreign is not a common experience. You can learn a little bit about their cultures and even learn a new language. More often than not, you will be going to school with these foreign kids. In summary, it's good to be a military kid, because you are able to do three very nice things.

- Ike Hill

Neaveh's Story

Being a military child feels like we are always moving. Well, that is fine because I like to move to different places and see the rest of the world. I'm in middle school and I have been a military child for the past six years. Being a military child has ups and downs. Also, it means that you will be spending your years in different schools like me! Going to other schools is hard for me because all my friends are gone and I haven't seen my family for years. It is a lot of money to fly to where my family lives in the US. For example, my Memaud did and wasn't there to be at her funeral. My aunt had her first baby and I still couldn't be there. Being a military child means being powerful and strong and nothing can take us down! All the military children I have met are amazing and you can be too! We are proud to serve in the military and I am proud to be a military child. Some bad things about being a military child are that you have to pay a lot of money to move your car. If you don't want to ship it, you can buy another car when you move. Also, when you move a lot you need to have a lot of storage places. Having a lot of storage places means you have to have a lot of money to store all your belongings. Some of the good things of being a military child are you get to see the Eiffel tower and if you want, you can learn to speak other languages. Being a military child means you will be moving a lot. I lived in the U.S. in Georgia, and I flew from Georgia to London then to Brussels and those places were not that comfortable. But after we got to Belgium, we got to see the Eiffel tower and a light show and I know a little French!

- Neaveh S

My childhood

Pm Michal (read Michael), I'm from the Czech Republic and this is my story about me living here in Belgium. It started when I was playing outside and my dad was still at work. When he came from work, he said he passed an English test. I didn't think a lot about it until he said "we are moving" because he had passed the test. I got a little bit scared of the announcement; it could mean the loss of all my friends. I left them behind and I was sad, but then a PC game came out and our destroyed group was back again.

When we first arrived in Belgium, I didn't like it at all and the only friend I had was my neighbor. Then I found a community from my country and we played outside and online. It was even more fun to have friends. I started to like it here. The only problem was

Celebrating Month of the Military Child

→ school, it was hard for me and I didn't know English at all so then I was going to ESL and there was a fun teacher. She was funny and always happy, so she did these events like a pancake race. My group won! The best was a trip to Scotland. I was so happy about this trip because I knew English and to go with her class was amazing. I had fun in ESL and it made me like school and I made new friends from other countries. When another year rolled around, ESL turned into ESOL and I got in a regular class. When I brought apple out into moons at school and when I just opened the box, the people came to me and everybody in the class wanted one piece so I became popular in the class with apples. I liked the teacher and a club that I loved was robotics. We got 3rd place in Europe and that was fantastic and we were the first team to get to the finals at our school. I had a lot of fun and I made new friends. Because of new friends, I don't want to go away from Belgium. I want to stay here and that will maybe happen because of COVID-19. I know, I wanted to go away from Belgium at the start, but now I don't want to. My last year was perfect here and I like Belgium. I hope I come back here.

— Michal S

Karioumenes Vaikas

There are always positives and negatives to being a military child. My dad works in the military. I'm from a small country Lithuania, but now I live in Belgium. Some people don't know what it's like being a military child. When I was one year old my father had to go to Afghanistan for two years. I don't remember that time, but my mom said it was hard without him. You have to move every three or two years. You have to leave your friends and sometimes even your family. I have a best friend in Lithuania, but she doesn't know what it's like to leave your country for three years. She doesn't know what it's like to see your dad in his uniform every day. Being a military child could also be fun. You can travel all around the world, see new countries, learn new languages, meet new friends. Being a military child is awesome!

— Paula L

Difficultly

There are goods and bad things about being a military child. Being a military child is not easy but it can help you build a better future, and maybe you could serve in the American military. Serving for the military at a young age is sort of a bad thing but there are some positive points to it. Serving at a young age for the military is bad

because maybe you are not used to it, and you are the one to have less experience on the job. When you get more comfortable with it and get used to it, it will help your country and you are going to build a better future. I wouldn't serve in the military because I have a different goal that I want to reach, and the military has nothing to do with my objective. Maybe I can change my mind and serve for the Italian military when I am a little bit older.

— Antonio I

Amazing memories

Hello I am Addyson. I am a military kid. I know it can be difficult to have to move every 2-3 years, but there are also good things that you get from being a military kid. I have moved to 7 different places in my life, while that is difficult, I also got to have many good experiences that most people only get if they move around a lot. Being a military kid I have had to see my friends leave or leave my friends because I have to move. I also get to see so much of the world because I get to travel every where I go. These experiences have made me who I am today. I remember it was hardest when my dad was deployed to Afghanistan because I was only two when he left and three when he came back. I don't remember it that well, but I know my mom, my brother, and I lived in Michigan. Living there was a different experience for me because there aren't any military bases in Michigan so I knew people will live there their whole lives and will never live anywhere else. The downsides of military life is having to move frequently, but there are good parts of being a military kid like meeting kids from around the world or your own country and those experiences have shaped who I am. I make amazing memories wherever I am and meet new people that I will remember for a long time. That is why there are also good things that come out of being a military child.

— Addyson

Civilian

Being a military kid is hard because you have to move a lot. That means you lose a lot of your friends and that is for me I have gotten used to losing all of my friends and I know you just need to move on. I have lived in three continents I have moved 8 or 9 times in my life. So it is not easy being a military kid. I have lived in Japan and in Germany and in the USA and Korea. Now I live in Belgium. My dad is a civilian so he works for the military but is not in the military. I feel bad for the kids who have their dads deployed because they do not know their dad is going to come back home. Their dad could be

gone for good or gone for 2 to 3 years at a time. But more about me I have traveled all over the world and I am very lucky.

— Luc B

Winding River

Life is like a river - it has its own flow. As a military child, my river is winding, full of sharp turns, of unexpected turns and surprises. I like this life. I like surprises, learning new languages, meeting new people. In 2018 I got to move to Belgium. I had to say goodbye to everybody - my friends, my family, my home, my everything. I had to completely change my life. I got casted into deep water, and I had to figure out fast how to swim. That was the second time ever that I had to move from Poland because of my dad's job. When I was little, we moved to the Netherlands for three years. I remember that it was a big deal. But what could we do? We just worked it out... Mostly my parents did. All the memories from there are good memories for me. My brother was born there.

And now I am here, in Belgium, and I live my life like I always did. My sister was born a year ago here, in Belgium. We live in a 2-floor house, we have a big backyard and a front yard. I go to Middle School and I enjoy it. I made new friends, who are not as good as my friends back from Poland, but now I have more of them. Still, sometimes I feel that my real Home is in Poland, that's the place where I mostly grew up in and I find our tiny apartment in Poland warm and cozy. My big and white inside house in Belgium feels cold. But I like that the military base I am living in is in harmony with nature. Trees and bushes are all over the place, and we even have a little forest. I love the place I live in, the one in Poland and the one in Belgium. I am generally proud of being a soldier's child. I love experiencing new things. I love the feeling of being back home, which I couldn't experience if I lived in one country. I have a dream - I hope my river will flow just like it does now, and that there will be no droughts.

— Marta K

See more SHAPE American Middle School students' stories on next page.



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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

SHAPE American Middle School

Environmental Changes

What are changes? The actual meaning of change is to make or become different. There are many examples of changes. Changes in science, media, technology or even changes in life. A change in life could be to gain or lose something, move somewhere or do something different. I have experienced many environmental changes in my life even though I'm only 11 years old. How have I done that? My name is Sofia, I'm from Greece and I am a military child. As a child, I have been moving from one place to another or from one house to another for as long as I can remember. This can be either good or bad. I have had some really nice experiences that I will never forget, but also situations which made me sad but I learned from, and have made me stronger. Being a military child has helped me learn lots of things, have lots of experiences and make new friends. I believe that military kids are just like other kids with just a different lifestyle. I have always been moving from one place to another which has given me both positive and negative experiences that are both acceptable to me because they have taught me lots of things that help me and will help me in my life. I believe that military kids are like dandelions because they bloom everywhere they are planted!

- Sofia T

Things about being a Military Brat

Hello, I'm Jackson and I'm going to tell you how it feels about being a military brat. You learn that you have to move a lot, live in new houses and learn how to make new friends along the way on your travels. You notice that you have to do it a lot and you get sad and you normally say "I miss my friends" and then you say "Can we move back please, because I want to see my friends again?" Now, the positives about being a military brat. One of the positives is that you get to discover new places and new foods which was fun to me when we moved to Belgium. I got to try the yummy desserts and food, like frites, mussels and all the different types of waffles. Oh, I forgot to tell you the most interesting thing about me. I was born in Melbourne, Australia but I'm also half American. My mum is an Aussie and my Dad is American, so that makes me an Oz/American! If you heard me speak before you will know I don't sound like a true Australian. This is because I lost my accent when I was very young because I moved to America. I have one last thing to say. It's okay to be a military brat whenever you have to move or say goodbye to your friends you will get used to it. Since I moved here in Belgium I have made some friends. Most of my new friends are European and some are American. I got to a really cool school with students from many different countries and cultures. It's fun to make new friends along the way because you can not only play with them at school but also online at home and wherever you live in the world.

- Jackson

Advantages/Disadvantages

Friday, March 13th was the last day before our school began doing online classes from home. Since then, on weekdays, we've been doing online classes instead of going to school. We don't get to see our friends that we'd usually see at school. Sure we're able to chat on Google Hangouts, but it's not the same as actually hanging out with them. I'm really to go back to school, which is surprising because I wasn't really a fan of school before the quarantine happened. Living as a military child, your parents sometimes get deployed as well. I remember when it was the middle of summer before fifth grade that my dad had gotten deployed to Iraq for 9 months. Those nine months were hard for both my younger brother and I. Once school had started up dad had gotten deployed again really hard for my brother. The day my dad got back my brother and I got to skip a day of school. We were so happy to see him and I remember actually crying, which I don't do often. But the tears that I had cried that day were only tears of joy and relief that he was finally home.

- Gabby F

Dear Non-Military children

Being a military child may seem hard but that's not always the case. Sure, being a military has its pros and cons but if you are a military child you get a lot of opportunities to learn about different cultures firsthand, make new and long-lasting friendships. The downside of it is that you have to leave all of your behind. This is coming from first-hand experiences so don't worry I know the feeling of being a non-military and military child. Every time your friends

or you move it is really hard to say bye and it may seem that you will never see them again, but you are wrong. You may get to fly F-18 for many years. Now I live in Belgium. I came from Spain two and a half years ago and I am going back home this summer. Then, I would like to stay there for a year or two before moving to another foreign country. As you can see, this is one of the good things about being a military child: traveling to new places. There are other things that I like. You have the possibility to learn more languages, especially if you have the option to attend a school with classes in the native language. Besides, you learn many things about other cultures (traditions, food, religion), and you get to know many people, not only from that specific country but from different nations, in the case of studying in an international school. So, I think that being a military child is awesome.

- Mikey R

Life of a Military Kid

Hi, I am Javier. I am a military child. In my family, my father is in the Air Force and works for the military. He used to fly F-18 for many years. Now I live in Belgium. I came from Spain two and a half years ago and I am going back home this summer. Then, I would like to stay there for a year or two before moving to another foreign country. As you can see, this is one of the good things about being a military child: traveling to new places. There are other things that I like. You have the possibility to learn more languages, especially if you have the option to attend a school with classes in the native language. Besides, you learn many things about other cultures (traditions, food, religion), and you get to know many people, not only from that specific country but from different nations, in the case of studying in an international school. So, I think that being a military child is awesome.

- Javier D

Good memories

Hello, my name is Maria. I am a military child from Romania. Being a military child has its ups and downs. I have moved 3 times already. It can be really hard but at some point, you get used to it, especially if you do it since you were a baby just like me. The first time I had to leave my home country was when I was 9 months old. I moved to Spain and learned Spanish. Sadly, I was so small and I wasn't practicing it anymore when I moved back to Romania, so I forgot a lot of it. I loved Spain a lot. It was an amazing experience. I lived there for 3 years until I was 4 years old. I moved to France. I still live here and it's supposed to be my last year. So far I've been here for 4 years.

Being a military child you get many amazing opportunities. You get to meet new people from so many different countries. I have friends from Greece, Italy, America, and so many more countries. You get to know a new language and even brag about it if you want. Before I came here I hated going to English lessons and I barely knew any. Now I speak fluent English and a tiny bit of French. I got to visit so many countries and I even got to go to a different continent! I have so many good memories that I will treasure forever.

- Maria L

Really proud

Being a military child is no walk in the park, but it has its advantages. You get to travel and go to cool camps. Don't forget to mention that you get discounts at stores and restaurants. One bad thing is that your parents have to get deployed for one or more years. Having your parents deployed is terrible. You miss them a lot, but the worst part is watching them drive away on a huge bus with other soldiers waiting at their families. It is nice to know I am not the only one that knows what it feels like. On my birthday, when my dad was still in Afghanistan, a lady whose husband was also deploying made me a professional cake for my birthday. I got to go to lots of fun camps while being at the military base. It was super fun. I get to travel a ton because I live in Belgium. I am super proud of my father and I am really proud to be a military child. I am happy that my father is in the military.

- Eliza H

Proud of it!

Do you have any idea how it is to be a military child? I do and I'm proud of it! My dad works in the military which makes me a military child. There are always challenges in life including military child's.

There are a few negative things about being a military child. One of them is that you have to move every couple of years. Because of that you have to say bye to all of your friends for a while, and when you come back you understand that they are not the same person anymore. Their character might have changed which results in you two being not close friends anymore. Also you have adapted into a new environment. Have to make new friends and meet new people,

maybe even learn a new language!

There are also a few positive things about being a military child, but they overcome the negatives. One of the positive things is that you get to see the world. Every country has something interesting in it. It can be history, monuments or traditions, and you get to learn and see it! Another positive thing is that you get to meet new and interesting people. They might be from another country and become your good friends. Meeting people from other countries makes you understand that no matter the nation, human beings are all the same.

- Emir I

Different cultures

My name is Max and I am a military child, being a military child with high ranking parents is hard. Most of the time my dad got back home at 12 pm. My mom had to give briefings and debriefings until late in the evening. Most of the time we spent hours past closing at a youth center. Often it's hard to even want to make friends because you know it's likely you will never see them again in 2-3 years. But being a military child has its positives. You get to experience different cultures and meet many people. I have lived across two oceans and all across the beautiful United States of America.

- Max H

It's cool

My name is Robin and I was born in Germany. I have moved a lot since I was a baby. My mom went to training courses a lot when I was small. Sometimes they would only be a couple of weeks but sometimes they lasted up to 6 months, they were all over Germany. So I would go somewhere with my mom and go to a kindergarten there and after a couple of weeks we left again. It would sometimes be easy to go because I didn't find good friends in a couple of weeks, but sometimes it would be hard to go because I found so many new friends. After a while of doing this I got used to it and I tried to not find friends anymore because it would be too hard to go. When I was seven (in 2015) we went back home so I could go to first grade there. After first grade we moved to Belgium where I still am in 2020. That was the hardest move so far because in that one year in first grade I had found so many new friends, I still text with some of them. That was the first time I lived outside of Germany. It was very different to live in Belgium. So after we moved here I went to an international elementary school. In that school people spoke English. It was a totally new language to me back then. It took me a while to get the hang of it but after a while I got used to speaking English all day. After a while I even found some friends. So I am still here but next year we will move again which will be very hard for me because I lived here for six years and I found so many friends and I might never see them again. And after I lived in Germany for three years, who knows what will happen. My mom wants to go to America but my dad wants to stay in Germany so age. Overall being a military child is cool but not always easy.

- Robin Noh

Crazy Life

Being a Military child is kind of crazy because you have a lot, see a lot of different places and see new people. Sometimes it's fun sometimes is scary but all at the end it's fun. I have been a military child for 4 years now. I have met my best friends and enemies over the years. Once when I first moved to Maryland that next week, I had to go to school, but I caught the pink eye, so I had to stay at home for the rest of the week. I was like yay! I don't have to go to school yet! But when I walked into the classroom room everybody went silent. I was so scared because I was only in 3rd grade and I thought nobody would like me. But on the first day I had a lot of friends. It's cool to be a military child because you get to see new places and new people. Also, you have a lot of cool stories to tell when you meet your new friends. The bad part of being a military child is to leave your old friends behind and start over at a new place. And have a new house and no internet on the first day. Traveling to new places is fun because if you have never been to that place before it will be fun to go. Sometimes it's kind of crazy to be a military kid. But you get to go on a lot of fun and crazy adventures. I'm just looking forward to going to new ones and I hope you are too. Have a good day, hope you liked my story.

- Kyla D



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NATION



PARLO MARTINEZ MONSIVALS/AP

Then-President Barack Obama, accompanied by then-Vice President Joe Biden, walks back to the Oval Office in Washington after speaking about the election in the Rose Garden in November 2016.

Obama endorses former VP Biden

By JANET HOOK
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Former President Barack Obama on Tuesday formally endorsed Joe Biden for president, a big step in helping to unite their party and marking his own entry into the fight against President Donald Trump.

Evoking the nation's current health and economic crisis, Obama said in a video release, "Joe has the character and the experience to guide us through one of our darkest times, and heal us through a long recovery."

There had been little doubt that Obama would back his former vice president once Biden had a lock on the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, but Obama — one of the most popular Democrats in the country — had steadfastly withheld any endorsement during the long party contest that featured numerous contenders.

"Choosing Joe to be my vice president was one of the best decisions I ever made, and he became a close friend," Obama said, speaking straight to the camera in the 12-minute video. "And I believe Joe has all the qualities we need in a president right now."

Obama's endorsement came one day after Biden secured the formal backing of his last remaining rival, Sen. Bernie Sanders, of Vermont. Another former competitor, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, of Massachusetts, is expected to soon endorse Biden as well; the timing of the announcement is being largely

determined by the Biden campaign, according to a source familiar with the planning.

The high-level endorsements are part of an orchestrated effort to unify the Democratic Party for the general-election push to defeat Trump, and to avoid the kind of lingering post-primary divisions that hampered the 2016 nominee, Hillary Clinton.

Obama did not endorse anyone during the primary season because, sources close to him said, he believed his most important role would be as the uniter after a competition that pitted the party establishment that Biden represented and the liberal wing that Sanders leads. As Biden's hold on the nomination became clear in past weeks, Obama had several conversations with Sanders in advance of the senator's withdrawal from the race, according to a source familiar with the conversations.

In his endorsement video for Biden, Obama lavished praise on Sanders.

"Bernie's an American original — a man who has devoted his life to giving voice to working people's hopes, dreams and frustrations," Obama said. "He and I haven't always agreed on everything. But we've always shared a conviction that we have to make America a fairer, more just, more equitable society."

Obama also defended Biden against criticism from the left that his agenda is not bold enough to tackle the nation's problems.

"Joe already has what is the most progressive platform of any major party nominee in history," Obama said.

Alabama police detective is charged with murder after 'love triangle gone wrong'

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — An Alabama police detective fatally shot a woman as part of a "love triangle" dispute with a colleague, authorities said.

Birmingham police Detective Alfreda Fluker, 39, was charged Tuesday with capital murder in the Friday killing of Kanisha Nicole Fuller, news outlets reported. Fluker was also charged with the attempted murder of Detective Mario Theodore White, her coworker on the Birmingham Police Department's Crime Reduction Team.

Officers responding to a reported shooting at a Birmingham park found Fuller, 43, suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. She was hospitalized and later pronounced dead.

Fuller was found inside an unmarked Birmingham police vehicle that was assigned to White, Birmingham Police Chief Patrick Smith said. White was there too, but he wasn't wounded. There is no indication White called 911 following the shooting, authorities said.

Investigators determined Fluker was the shooter and she was arrested Saturday morning. It's

unclear whether Fluker had an attorney who could comment on her behalf.

Fluker has been with the department for about 15 years. White is on leave pending the investigation. Additional details regarding the shooting weren't immediately released.

Smith said he didn't know the exact relationship between White, Fluker and Fuller but said both women at one point were in a relationship with White.

"It's something that's been going on for a little while," he said, "but without our knowledge."

PG&E plan to pay fees from victims' fund is approved

Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. — The Northern California victims of catastrophic wildfires caused by Pacific Gas & Electric's decaying electrical grid will have at least \$19 million siphoned away from a \$13.5 billion fund for their losses to cover administrative costs.

A bankruptcy judge said he would approve drawing from the victims' fund as part of a plan reviewed Tuesday during a court hearing. The decision came after PG&E and a committee representing the victims struck an accord on a \$21.8 million budget for administering the \$13.5 billion fund for the thousands of people who lost loved ones, homes and businesses during a series of deadly wildfires in 2017 and 2018.

PG&E will pay an additional \$2.5 million to cover the fund's administrative fees, but the rest of the money will come from the fund earmarked for the fire victims. Bankruptcy judge Dennis Montal's blessing.

Even more money could be diverted from the fire victims' fund to cover its administrative costs if PG&E's plan for getting out of bankruptcy gains court approval by June 30, but misses its Aug. 29 target date for becoming effective.

The economic upheaval triggered by the coronavirus pandemic has increased the chances that it may take longer for PG&E to raise the tens of billions of dollars that will be needed to finance its proposed bankruptcy plan than the company envisioned earlier this year.

The uncertainty prompted the company to draw up a contingency plan that calls for the plan becoming effective Dec. 30, which would result in the fire victims having to wait until next year before the \$13.5 billion fund starts

to pay their claims.

If the plan isn't effective until Dec. 30, another \$21.2 million could be drained from the fire victims' pool of money.

Taking any money away from the fire victims' fund has been a hot-button issue since PG&E agreed to the settlement in December. At one point, two government disaster-relief agencies had been seeking to take a \$4 billion claim on the victims' fund, but finally backed off.

Last month, PG&E agreed to a \$4 million fine as part of a plea agreement to 84 counts of involuntary manslaughter in a deadly wildfire in 2018 and initially said its bankruptcy financing plan required it to pay for its crimes from the victims' fund. Stung by an indignant backlash, PG&E negotiated for a group of insurers to pay the fine from their gains earned from a \$11 billion settlement that the utility is paying them as part of the bankruptcy plan.

Even if the \$13.5 billion remained totally intact, many fire victims are worried there still won't be enough to fully compensate the more than 82,000 people filing claims for their property losses and emotional trauma. Those concerns have been elevated by the \$6.75 billion in stock that will represent half of the fund. Like the rest of the stock market, PG&E stock has sunk during the past two months, prompting one financial expert to estimate the stock earmarked for the victims' fund may now only be worth \$4.85 billion.

Montali expressed reservations during Tuesday's court hearing about allowing such a large amount of the victims' money being paid for the fund's oversight and administration. But he set them aside after being assured by lawyers that the people overseeing the work will only be paid for as long as they are needed.



NOAH BERGER/AP

The remains of residences leveled by the Camp wildfire in Paradise, Calif., are seen in November 2018.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police probe robbery by men wearing face covers

DE WILMINGTON — Delaware State Police are investigating an armed robbery by two men wearing face covers. Authorities said the suspects entered a Dollar General store in Wilmington. Both were wearing face covers, and one was armed with a gun.

Masks and face covers have become a common sight in stores and on streets amid the coronavirus epidemic.

Police said the suspects cornered employees and customers together inside Dollar General before ordering an employee to open the safe and cash registers. They also demanded that all the individuals turn over their money.

Cremation bag among beach trash finds

NJ SANDY HOOK — Items plucked from New Jersey's beaches during spring and fall cleanups each year help illustrate trends going on in the state and the nation.

Empty cartridges used with electronic cigarettes, known as "vaping pods," are showing up in increasing numbers as vaping continues to grow, particularly among young people.

Some of the items found on the beaches included a full jar of pickles and an empty bag that had held cremated human remains.

And a \$6,000 diamond engagement ring, found on the sand in Asbury Park in October 2019. It was returned to its owner after some amateur sleuthing.

State given ownership of last US slave ship

AL BIRMINGHAM — The last slave ship known to have landed in the United States more than 150 years ago has a new owner: the state of Alabama.

A federal judge granted ownership of the Clotilde shipwreck to the Alabama Historical Commission in a one-page order.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Kristi DuBose means the state will have final say over remnants of the ship.

The Clotilda, a two-masted Gulf schooner, sailed to West Africa on an illegal trip financed by a wealthy white businessman as a nation divided over slavery was building toward Civil War. It delivered about 110 kidnapped Africans to Mobile before it was burned in a bayou in 1860 to hide evidence of the crime.

A few pieces of the ship were removed from the river and will be part of an exhibition planned to open later this year in Mobile.

Driver rescued from truck dangled over river

VA CHESAPEAKE — Firefighters rescued a truck driver whose tractor-trailer was nearly blown off a bridge in Virginia, leaving his cab dangling 70 feet over a river.

A large wind gust caused the driver, Wayne B. Boone, to lose



MATT ROURKE/AP

Make like Rocky

A woman gestures to a child wearing a protective face mask to pose for a photograph with the Rocky statue outfitted with a mock surgical face mask at the Philadelphia Art Museum in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

control, Virginia State Police Sgt. Michelle Anaya told news outlets.

He had to be pulled from his cab, which was dangling off the side of Interstate 64's High Rise bridge over the Elizabeth River, the Chesapeake Fire Department said in a Twitter post.

It said firefighters used a series of complex rope maneuvers to reach the driver and pull him to safety.

State launches drive for use of lead-free sinkers

MN ST. PAUL — Minnesota officials are launching a campaign to encourage anglers to stop using lead sinkers because they most likely cause the fatal poisoning of swans.

Officials want to persuade anglers to switch to non-lead tackle and sinkers to protect swans, loons and other birds that mistake sinkers for small stones usually consumed to help digestion, the Star Tribune reported.

The University of Minnesota conducted necropsies that determined lead poisoning was the cause of death for several birds.

Woman charged in ID theft over 2 years

MS OCEAN SPRINGS — Police said a Mississippi woman faces charges for illegally buying \$140,000 in

THE CENSUS

72

The length in feet of a fishing vessel that ran aground on North Carolina's Outer Banks and has become a tourist attraction. The Charlotte Observer reported that the ship, named Ocean Pursuit, was grounded at Cape Hatteras National Seashore March 1. "We have received multiple reports that groups of people are boarding the vessel," Cape Hatteras spokesman Mark Barber told McClatchy News. "Visitors must not board the shipwreck due to safety concerns."

goods and services using the personal information of a 77-year-old woman she assisted with bills and shopping.

Tammie Scott, of Vanceave, had access to the victim's bank accounts and credit cards and used the victim's personal information to open additional accounts and lines of credit, spending thousands over two years, Ocean Springs Police Capt. Ryan Le-maire told WLOX-TV.

Scott was charged with exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

New island replaces old one off coast

NC NAGS HEAD — Two years after a newly formed North Carolina island was lost to storm surge, a new one appears to be rising in its place on the Outer Banks, park officials said.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore said the nearly 100-foot long formation was discovered about a quarter of a mile south of

Cape Point. It's in the same area where Shelly Island showed up on a NASA satellite in the fall of 2016, officials said.

Shelly Island, so named by tourists for its plentiful seashells, survived for more than two years. It grew to 20 acres and a mile in length before a series of storms cut it in half, then washed it away, news sources reported.

Man arrested after virus test sample stolen

CA DAVIS — A 40-year-old man was arrested after police said he stole a coronavirus test sample from a hospital in Davis.

Shaun Lamar Moore, of Davis, was taken into custody on suspicion of burglary after an officer saw him riding his bicycle across an overpass. Authorities said that a day earlier, Moore stole a specimen that was being tested for COVID-19 at Sutter Davis Hospital and fled the scene on a bike.

Davis police officers responded

to the hospital after an employee called to report the theft. Several hours later, police received a call from someone reporting that the sealed specimen had been found in a shopping cart at a CVS Pharmacy less than a mile from the hospital.

Authorities said it is not clear why the specimen was stolen.

Fishery charged with wasting game fish

OH COLUMBUS — An Ohio fishery was charged with wildlife violations after investigators observed abuse and waste of game fish, officials said.

Investigators from the state Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife received employees from Suzh Fishery Inc. intentionally injure a rare trophy-size fish after it was removed from a commercial fishing net in western Lake Erie, the Dayton Daily News reported Sunday.

Employees were also seen removing several fish from commercial nets, breaking their spines and throwing them back in the lake, according to the department.

The fishery will appear in court on charges of causing intentional injury to a noncommercial fish species, 10 counts of stream littering and 10 counts of disposing of dead fish.

From wire reports

FACES

Ballerini exposes vulnerable side

Country artist at the height of her success focuses on insecurities on new album

By EMILY YAHK
The Washington Post

Country music star Kelsea Ballerini was in Los Angeles on a rare night off last year and decided to call a couple friends — at least one of whom happened to be a celebrity. No one picked up. Anxious thoughts started to race.

"I went into this spiral of like, 'Oh my God, why did I think I was cool enough to call Taylor Swift? That was so embarrassing; of course she didn't pick up. Why am I even out here? Why am I writing songs in L.A.? What if I put a beat drop on these songs? Is Nashville going to be mad that I have a beat drop on these songs instead of a banjo? Should I be home right now?'" Ballerini, 26, recalled during a recent interview.

To calm down, she turned to the therapeutic method she has used since she was 12 years old: songwriting. She didn't have a guitar with her, so she wrote a poem: "Sometimes it feels like it's all real, but nothing here is as it seems / I ask myself, does it feed my soul, or my anxiety?" The lines eventually turned into the lyrics for "L.A.," the final track on her third studio album, "Kelsea."

The album, which features songwriting collaborations with Nashville writers along with Ed Sheeran and Julia Michaels, is deeply personal as it dives into Ballerini's insecurities and vulnerabilities. They might seem like unusual topics, given that Ballerini is at the height of her success: She's had Grammy nominations, a string of No. 1s on country radio, a headlining arena tour, two certified-gold albums, a platinum-selling duet with the Chainsmokers ("This Feeling") and stints on TV shows including "The Voice" and "Songland."

But it's been a long road. When Ballerini was in high school and traveled from Knoxville, Tenn., to Nashville to see if her love of songwriting could turn into a career, label executives were puzzled when they saw a blond teenage country singer with a guitar. Didn't they already have Swift?

After many doors shut in her face, she was determined to make her music stand out. Her first hit, "Love Me Like You Mean It," was bursting with self-confidence, and similar "bops" (Ballerini's word) such as "Dibs," "Yeah Boy" and "Miss Me More" followed suit. But this new record intentionally has a more introspective tone, Ballerini said, because she finally took a break from nonstop touring and had time for self-reflection.

"I had to get to know myself at 26 and realize that I'm not the same person who wrote the first or second albums," Ballerini said. "I still have bits of that con-



Peggy Sirotta

Kelsea Ballerini's third album, the self-titled "Kelsea," features songwriting collaborations with Nashville's top writers along with Ed Sheeran and Julia Michaels.

fidence and that swagger in this album. But it's definitely paired with a lot more truth-telling."

Ballerini has always been candid about her challenges, even as she hit her stride. She admitted on Bobby Bones' podcast in 2017 that she felt like some people in Nashville didn't find her very "cool" because of her pop-infused country songs. Earlier that year, after performing on the Academy of Country Music Awards, she posted a defiant Instagram caption: "I wear a lot of glitter, I have bass drops and programmed beats in my songs and performances. But ya know what, I write, sing, and LOVE country music."

So when writing this album, Ballerini doubled down on exploring tough questions: "Why am I so anxious all the time? Why all of a sudden am I the most insecure person that I know?" She realized if she was having those feelings, other people probably were too, no matter their level of success. It all culminated during a weekend while she was touring last year with Kelly Clarkson and invited top Nashville songwriters Nicole Galyon and Jimmy Robbins to join her for a few days on the road.

"For different reasons, we were all in really vulnerable places," Galyon said. As the three brainstormed ideas, something

clicked as they shared personal details. She and Ballerini both cried. Over those few days on the tour bus, they wrote songs that altered Ballerini's entire idea for the album. "I think we knew and she knew that she had begun writing the record."

They wrote a ballad called "Homecoming Queen?" about the facade of perfection: Just because things in your life are going right, it doesn't mean you're devoid of pain. "What if I told you the world wouldn't end? If you started showing what's under your skin? What if you let 'em all in on the lie? Even the homecoming queen cries."

Ballerini's transparency comes through in other tracks: her nerves about connecting with people on "Overshare," social anxiety on "Club" (and the realization in your mid-20s that nightclubs are the worst); feeling jealous on "The Other Girl," which features pop star Halsey. However, she felt that "Homecoming Queen?" so perfectly captured the tone of the album that she wanted to release it as the first single, a risky move in a genre often wary of ballads. But it's currently in the Top 20 on country radio.

"It wasn't the traditional pop that I normally put out," Ballerini said. "But I think it was time for me as a songwriter to really show that side of myself."

Trek to publish a memoir while fighting pancreatic cancer

By DORANY PINEDA
Los Angeles Times

Alex Trebek will soon share his life story with the world.

Simon & Schuster announced on Tuesday that the publisher will release "The Answer Is: Reflections on My Life," a memoir by the beloved and longtime "Jeopardy!" host that will hit shelves July 21 — one day before his 80th birthday. "I want people to know a little more about the person they have

been cheering on for the past year," writes Trebek in the book.

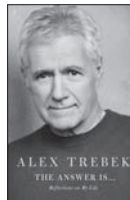
The host had resisted writing a memoir for decades, but the outpouring of support he's received from fans since his Stage 4 pancreatic cancer diagnosis in 2019 inspired him to write one.

The book weaves personal anecdotes with ruminations on education, parenthood, marriage, success, spirituality and philanthropy, according to a news release from the publisher.

The memoir's chapters are titled in the form of questions, a structure inspired by the long-running TV show. The book will also feature dozens of never-before-seen photos of Trebek.

Trek is in his 36th season as "Jeopardy!" host, which has earned him seven Daytime Emmy Awards — including a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Despite his ongoing fight with cancer, Trebek is still hosting the TV game show.



ALEX TREBEK
THE ANSWER IS:
Reflections on My Life

Options dwindle for 2020 Cannes

The Cannes Film Festival on Tuesday abandoned plans for a postponed 2020 edition in June or July but declined to give up entirely, saying it will explore other options.

French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday extended France's national lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, banning all public events until mid-July. That essentially dashed the hopes of Cannes organizers who last month said they would aim to move the annual May event a month or two.

"It is clearly difficult to assume that the Festival de Cannes could be held this year in its original form," according to a statement from festival planners.

"Since yesterday evening we have started many discussions with professionals, in France and abroad," said the statement. "They agree that the Festival de Cannes, an essential pillar for the film industry, must explore all contingencies allowing to support the year of Cinema by making Cannes 2020 real, in a way or another."

What that might entail was unclear. Several other film festivals, including SXSW and the Tribeca Film Festival, have introduced plans for virtual editions.

Such a path would be seemingly inconceivable for Cannes. The French festival not only plays a larger role in the launch of films from around the world, but Cannes has long been a staunch guardian of cinema history and the theatrical experience. It has famously ruled out Netflix films from competing for its top prize, the Palme d'Or.

"When the health crisis, whose resolution remains the priority of all, passes, we will have to reiterate and prove the importance of cinema and the role that its work artists, professionals, film theaters and their audiences, play in our lives," said the statement.

Essence Fest shifts sights toward 2021 for new dates

Amid the spread of the coronavirus, the organizers of Essence Festival said Wednesday they would move their festival to next year after the New Orleans mayor suggested that major spring and summer festivals that had been postponed to later this year should not be held at all in 2020.

The organization said it would honor all tickets that had already been sold for the 2020 festival if people wanted to use them in 2021 or people could get a refund. They did not specify exactly when the festival would be held in 2021. The festival is generally held over the July 4th weekend every year and is a major draw during what is usually a slow summer period.

Other news

■ NBCUniversal says its video-streaming service Peacock will launch nationally in July as planned, even though just a handful of its original series will be ready. The service was meant to have a mix of originals, classics, and current series, and current NBC programming like its late-night shows and "Law & Order: SVU."

■ British performer Tim Brooke-Taylor, a member of comedy trio The Goodies, died April 11 after contracting the new coronavirus. He was 79. Brooke-Taylor was part of Cambridge University's Footlights revue, the breeding ground of several generations of British comic talent.

WORLD

Cardinal links corruption to child abuse charges

By Rod McGuirk
Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — Cardinal George Pell has linked his fight against corruption in the Vatican with his prosecution in Australia for alleged child sex abuse.

Pell was regarded as the third highest-ranking Vatican official in 2018 when he became the world's most senior Catholic to be convicted of child sex abuse. He served 13 months in prison before Australia's High Court last week acquitted him of molesting two choirboys in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne while he was archbishop of Australia's second-largest city in the 1990s.

Pope Francis' former finance minister said in a television interview broadcast on Tuesday that some church officials believed he was prosecuted by Australian authorities because of the trouble he had caused in the Vatican in implementing financial reforms. "Most of the senior people in



SKY NEWS AUSTRALIA/AP

Cardinal George Pell is interviewed following his release from prison after Australia's highest court cleared him of child sex crimes.

Rome who are in any way sympathetic to financial reforms believe that they are" linked to the prosecution, the 78-year-old cleric told Sky News.

"What was surprising was even my theological opponents in Rome didn't believe the stories"

of sexual abuse, he added.

Pell said that he did not have evidence of a link. But he suspected that a man who swore he had been abused by Pell as a 13-year-old choirboy more than two decades ago had been "used."

Pell said that Francis had "ab-

solutely" supported him, even though "My theological views ... don't line up exactly with Pope Francis."

"I think he values my honesty and perhaps that I would say things that some other people mightn't say, and I think he respects me for that," Pell added.

Pell said that neither Francis nor Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin were corrupt, but that he did not know how high Vatican corruption rose.

"Just how high up it goes is an interesting hypothesis," he said.

Pell said that he'll return to Rome after the coronavirus pandemic to pack up his apartment, but that he plans to make his home in Sydney, where he had been archbishop.

Victoria police refused to comment on newspaper reports Tuesday that they have begun investigating another child abuse allegation against Pell dating back to the 1970s.

Pell said he was "ashamed" of his church over its child abuse

crisis.

"There are two levels. One is the crimes themselves and then the treating it so inadequately for so long," Pell said.

He warned in child abuse cases that "guilt by accusation" was "not a sign of a civilization."

"The pendulum 30 or 40 years ago was massively against anybody who said that they'd been attacked," Pell said. "Nowadays, we don't want it to swing back so that every accusation is regarded as gospel truth. That would be quite unjust and inappropriate."

Pell's accuser in his trial, a man in his 30s whose identity is concealed by law, said in a statement last week that he hoped Pell's acquittal would not deter child abuse victims from reporting to police.

"I would like to reassure child abuse survivors that most people recognize the truth when they hear it," said the man, described in court as Witness J. "They know the truth when they look it in the face. I am content with that."

Australian court rules search warrant on journalist to be invalid

By Rod McGuirk
Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — Australia's highest court ruled Wednesday that a search warrant at the center of a national storm over press freedom was invalid.

News Corp. journalist Annika Smethurst went to the High Court to overturn the warrant that was executed on her Canberra home in June last year and triggered a national campaign for greater press freedom.

The seven judges unanimously

agreed that the warrant was invalid, partly because it failed to state the offense suspected with sufficient precision.

But the majority of judges rejected her application for the material seized to be destroyed, meaning that police could still use it as evidence against her.

The raid followed an article written by Smethurst and published in April 2018 that was based on classified government documents. The article reported that the Defense Department and Home Affairs Department bosses

had canvassed giving a security agency new legal powers to spy on Australians.

A day after the Canberra raid, police executed warrants on the Sydney headquarters of Australian Broadcasting Corp. in search of unrelated leaked government documents.

ABC journalists Dan Oakes and Sam Clark — who reported in 2017 that Australian troops had killed unarmed men and children in Afghanistan in a potential war crime — as well as Smethurst could be charged over

their reporting.

Australian Federal Police Commissioner Reece Kershaw said that the evidence taken from Smethurst had been "quarantined" from the investigation for the moment.

"So what we'll do carefully and correctly is take legal advice ... on what we do with that particular material," Kershaw told reporters. "Investigators are not able to look at that."

News Corp. Australia Executive Chairman Michael Miller called on the government to change the

law so that media organizations can contest such warrants in court before they are executed.

"The High Court ruling sends an indisputable message that the Federal Police must obey the law and that their raid on Annika Smethurst's home was illegal," Miller said in a statement. "Annika Smethurst should not be prosecuted for simply doing her job as a journalist to rightly inform Australians on serious matters of public interest."



SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



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OPINION

Only the virus controls the political narrative

By MATT BAI
The Washington Post

It's not a polite thing to talk about in public, while coronavirus deaths and unemployment claims continue to rise. But, privately, there's growing anxiety in Washington over how the crisis will affect the November election and what the two parties ought to be doing about it. Should the presumptive Democratic nominee, Joe Biden, hold his own briefings to offer a contrast with the president? Should Republicans push harder to reopen the economy so it has a chance to rebound before the fall? What TV ads will shape the winning narrative, and which will backfire?

The simple answer to all of these questions is probably the same: In the end, it won't really matter what either side does right now.

You may remember what Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, said of the lockdowns: "You don't make the timeline. The virus makes the timeline."

Well, if history is any guide, the same thing holds true for campaigning in a year of national crisis. Don't control the narrative. The crisis does.

Not that you can blame either party for trying to game the falloff. Democrats worry that President Donald Trump is using the theater of his daily briefings to erase the memory of his dismissive response to the initial threat (although reviews there are mixed, even among many of his Republican allies). They fear a scenario where Trump, recast as a wartime president and claiming credit for having avoided the worst projections, will emerge in the fall as a stronger candidate for reelection.

Republicans, meanwhile, see a nightmare scenario where shutdowns and business closings linger into the summer, while the virus slowly fades and job losses

Fairly or not, incumbent presidents are always judged on the moment, no matter how they or their opponents try to spin it.

continue to mount. No president has won reelection on a slogan that says: "The depression could have been even worse."

What we know for certain, however, is that the virus will be the only actor determining this — whether we're going to ball-games or burying more loved ones, whether downtown shops are back to normal or shuttering any still open for business. And, fairly or not, incumbent presidents are always judged on the moment, no matter how they or their opponents try to spin it.

Jimmy Carter didn't directly cause the recession or take the hostages in Iran that led to his ouster in 1980, but a sense of growing futility in the country became his legacy anyway. George W. Bush toiled under the weight of his own sluggish economy in 2004, but voters felt more secure than they had after the 2001 terrorist attacks, and that was enough to get him reelected.

My friend Nathan Daschle, who used to direct the Democratic Governors Association, has a pretty simple and compelling theory about reelection campaigns for executives. He says it's always a two-part question.

First, voters ask themselves if the guy or woman in charge deserves to be reelected (or, as Ronald Reagan famously put it: "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?"). And only if the answer is no do they move on to asking whether the alternative candidate is someone for whom they can vote.

For Iraq's headless government, is 3rd time the charm?

By BOBBY GHOSH
Bloomberg Opinion

Who can begrudge Barham Salih for his Bill Murray-esque world-weariness? If the Baghdad version of "Groundhog Day" is exhausting for observers, it must be soul-sapping for Iraq's most put-upon president. For the third time since Poustawsatwiny Pity failed to find his shadow on Feb. 2, Salih is hoping Iraqi parliamentarians can find their sanity and a new prime minister they can support.

Mustafa al-Kadhimi, his latest nominee for the job, is now trying to assemble a coalition that will allow the formation of a government. The two previous attempts, by Mohammed Allawi and Adnan al-Zurfi, were defeated, primarily by acrimony within the dominant sectarian group in parliament, the Shiites. Both men were deemed insufficiently servile toward Iran by the Fatah faction, which takes its orders from Tehran.

In the panarabic worldview of the Islamic Republic and its Iraqi marionettes, anybody who doesn't ask, "How high?" when ordered in Persian to jump is automatically deemed an American stooge. Apparently, Allawi failed to pass Iran's loyalty test. Al-Zurfi was doomed from the start: He had dual American and Iraqi nationality.

Al-Kadhimi looks to have better luck: Tehran and Washington have signaled support for his candidature. In part, this is because, as the head of Iraqi intelligence since 2016, he cultivated good rela-

tions with both Iran and the U.S.

The Sunni and Kurdish blocks in parliament have also indicated support for al-Kadhimi. In this, he is the beneficiary of a growing fear within the Iraqi political elite that the country — beset by economic, social and security crises before the coronavirus pandemic arrived — may be near collapse. If the squabbling Shiite factions refused to recognize the danger, a visit to Baghdad by Esmail Ghaani, the successor to the assassinated Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, may have papered over some differences.

Not all, though. Al-Kadhimi's role as head of security services makes him anathema to some of Tehran's proxy militias in Iraq. Indeed, some accused him of complicity in the American drone strike that killed Soleimani and his principal Iraqi puppet, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. Members of the Kataeb Hezbollah, for instance, the militia founded by al-Muhandis, believe the spy chief provided the U.S. with the targeting information.

Sure enough, Kataeb Hezbollah has declared al-Kadhimi's candidature as a "declaration of war" on the Iraqi people. Iran could order the militia to back the candidate, but the regime in Tehran might want to keep its attack dogs snapping at his heels as a reminder of its power.

Al-Kadhimi knows what Iran expects of him: important Cabinet positions, security roles and government jobs for its creatures and free rein for the militias. Tehran also wants increased pressure on the U.S. to withdraw all troops from the country.

In Trump's case, that first question was always going to be a hard sell. For all the talk about Democratic turnout and Russian interference, Trump won in 2016 because a small chunk of moderate Republican and independent voters — who told pollsters they didn't like him very much but simply couldn't bear to vote for Hillary Clinton — took a fling at the challenger anyway.

Most of those voters never warmed to Trump, which is why his approval ratings have generally hovered just above the 40% mark ever since. So the main question this November, before we even get to Biden, is whether enough of those first-time Trump voters think he deserves reelection, whatever their distaste for the way he behaves.

And nothing will help settle the answer to that question until we know what the country's twin crises — health and economic — look like at the end of the summer, with early voting underway and the election a month or so off.

If the virus peters out and the economy is on the upswing, then those persuadable voters will probably judge Trump to have capably managed us through the crisis. If things are gloomy and chaotic, with rolling outbreaks and careening markets, then it will be hard for Trump to escape the verdict that he is the Republican Carter, only less sympathetic.

What won't matter much is whether the president actually deserves the credit or blame. What won't be relevant is whether Biden gave a few more speeches in April or May, or whether Trump managed to dazzle anyone with his bombastic briefings and ephemeral promises.

Nothing they do today is going to reliably tell us much about how voters will feel in November. Only the virus gets to do that.

Matt Bai, a Washington Post contributing columnist, is a nationally known journalist, author and screenwriter.

The new prime minister will also be required to protect Iranian leverage over Iraq's economy, which has become more important as the coronavirus crisis hammers Iran. Iraq is an important conduit for sanctions-busting trade, and supplies of foreign currency, much coveted by Tehran.

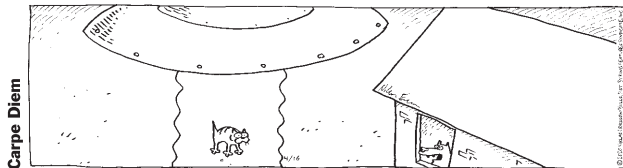
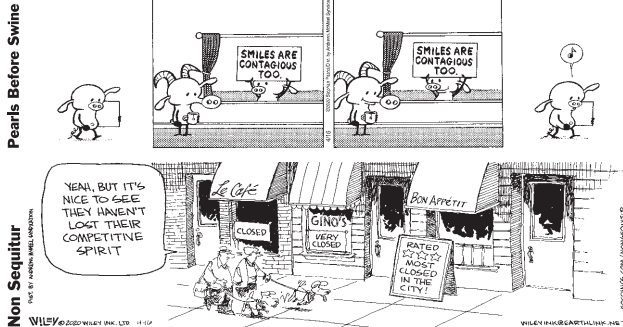
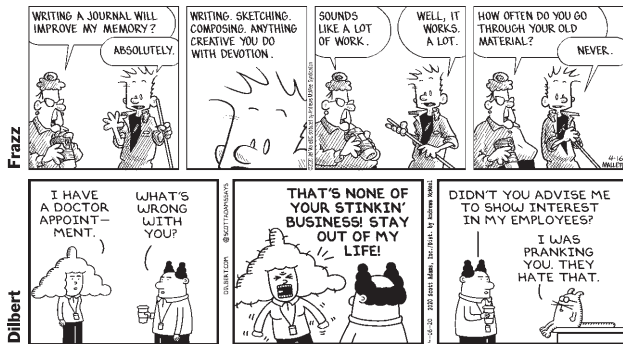
The U.S., in turn, will want al-Kadhimi to allow American troops to remain, and to push back against Iranian influence in Iraq.

Finding a balance between these demands would be hard enough at the best of times, but al-Kadhimi must also deal with a restive population, especially young Iraqis, who want to end all foreign interference in their country.

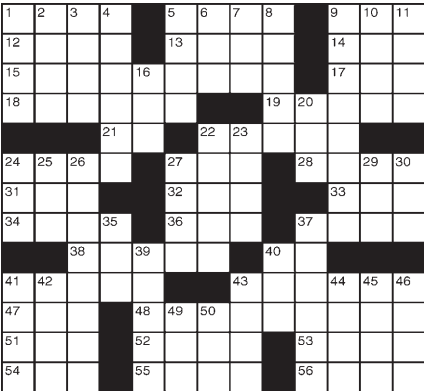
The protest movement that led to the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul Mahdi last November — which set off the sequence of failed attempts at government formation — is on hiatus because of the pandemic. The sight of Iraq's political class stitching up a new government of old faces, however, will not make it happy. When the lockdown is lifted, the Iraqi public square will once again fill with young people demanding jobs, dignity and clean government. And possibly, al-Kadhimi's resignation.

That assumes, of course, that al-Kadhimi can form a government — and perhaps finally bring President Salih's Groundhog Day to an end.

Bobby Ghosh is a columnist and member of the Bloomberg Opinion editorial board. He writes on foreign affairs, with a special focus on the Middle East and the wider Islamic world.

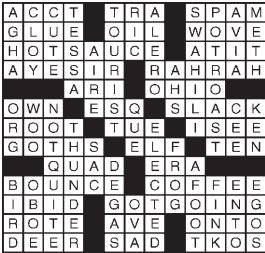


Eugene Sheffer Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Heap
 - 5 Physiques
 - 9 USMC rank
 - 12 Persia, today
 - 13 Sitarist
 - 14 Reaction to a light show
 - 17 — Lanka
 - 18 Main dish
 - 19 Ancient Mexican
 - 21 Pacino of "The Irishman"
 - 22 Dutch bloom
 - 24 Reindeer herder
 - 27 Fortify
 - 28 Prying
 - 31 Fuss
 - 32 Illustrations
 - 33 Born
 - 34 Stinger
 - 36 Judge Lance
 - 37 Bump into
 - 38 Squads
 - 40 That guy
 - 41 Reading lights
 - 43 Like an atrium
 - 47 Lyricist Gershwin
 - 48 Quickly
 - 51 Blemish
 - 52 Actress Falco
 - 53 Blanchett of "Elizabeth"
 - 54 Caribou kin
 - 55 Tide type
 - 56 Thames town
- DOWN**
- 1 Prop for Sherlock
 - 2 Pressing need
 - 3 Endure
 - 4 Catch
 - 5 Scottish slope
 - 6 Scull need
 - 7 Movie format
 - 8 Twine fiber
 - 9 Put off
 - 10 Goller's cry
 - 11 Swank
 - 16 Cartoon
 - 20 California wine,
 - for short
 - 22 Small fruit pies
 - 23 Golden rule
 - preposition
 - 24 Attorney's field
 - 25 Nabokov novel
 - 26 Stamp on a letter
 - 27 Hurt severely
 - 29 Observe
 - 30 However
 - 35 Zing
 - 37 Threat
 - 39 Colorado ski resort
 - 40 "Say what?"
 - 41 Gimlet garnish
 - 42 Asia's — Sea
 - 43 Dance move
 - 44 Aspiring atty's exam
 - 45 "Suffice — say ..."
 - 46 Adolescent
 - 49 Poem of praise
 - 50 "Chandelier" singer

Answer to Previous Puzzle



4-16 CRYPTOQUIP

YHNN-ZKGYK ABHKXD VBIUOI

YDG TVUKIHL V TNHIDBV GA

ANFAAQ OZQ AGBCVIUGKO:

XNGFL CGKHI.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A SNAKE IS SUFFERING FROM ALLERGY SYMPTOMS, I SUPPOSE IT MIGHT TAKE AN ANTI-HISS-TAMINE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals L

SCOREBOARD/COLLEGE SPORTS/SOCCER/BASKETBALL

Sports on AFN

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules.
myafn.net

Deals

Tuesday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
BUFFALO BILLS — Signed G. Evans
DETROIT LIONS — Re-signed O. Kenny
Wiggins
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS — Signed T. McDermott
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Re-signed G. Mike Lupat to a one-year contract.

Pro basketball

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
Toronto	46	18	719
Indiana	24	40	375
Philadelphia	39	25	600
Brooklyn	30	34	299
New York	21	45	318
Southeast Division			
Miami	42	24	631
Orlando	30	35	462
Washington	24	40	375
Charlotte	23	42	354
Atlanta	20	47	299
Central Division			
Milwaukee	52	12	815
Chicago	22	43	338
Cleveland	10	46	303
Cleveland	19	46	252
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
Houston	40	24	625
Dallas	24	25	597
Memphis	32	33	482
New Orleans	28	36	438
San Antonio	19	47	299
Northwest Division			
Denver	43	23	662
Portland	21	44	318
Oklahoma City	24	42	325
Minnesota	19	45	297
Pacific Division			
L.A. Lakers	49	14	778
L.A. Clippers	44	20	688
Sacramento	36	28	438
Phoenix	26	39	400
Golden State	15	50	231

All games postponed at least until mid-May.

Pro hockey

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
Boston	70	24	100
Tampa Bay	70	24	100
Toronto	70	24	100
Florida	69	25	96
Montreal	69	25	96
Buffalo	69	30	88
Ottawa	71	25	94
Detroit	71	25	94
Metropolitan Division			
Washington	69	24	100
Philadelphia	69	24	100
Pittsburgh	69	24	100
Carolina	69	24	100
Columbus	70	24	100
Vancouver	68	25	96
N.Y. Rangers	70	24	100
Chicago	72	22	118
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Central Division			
St. Louis	71	24	100
Colorado	69	24	100
Dallas	69	24	100
San Jose	69	24	100
Nashville	69	24	100
Minnesota	69	24	100
Chicago	72	22	118
Pacific Division			
Vegas	69	24	100
Edmonton	71	24	100
Calgary	70	24	100
Vancouver	69	24	100
Arizona	70	24	100
San Jose	69	24	100
Los Angeles	70	24	100
San Jose	69	24	100

All games postponed at least until mid-May.

Pro football

April 17 — Deadline for restricted free agents to sign offer sheets.
April 23-25 — NFL draft, remote location.
May 19 — Spring owners meeting, Marina del Rey, Calif.



NATI HARNIK/AP

TD Ameritrade Park in Omaha, Neb. will be empty this year after the College World Series was canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Conferences seek relief from NCAA

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

Five major football conference commissioners have asked the NCAA to relax some requirements to compete in Division I for four years, including the minimum number of sports a school must sponsor.

A letter from the commissioners of the American Athletic Conference, Mountain West, Mid-American Conference, Sun Belt and Conference USA to NCAA President Mark Emmert asked for temporary relief from financial aid requirements, along with average football attendance. The request was made on behalf of all 350 Division I schools. The commissioners also asked that a moratorium be placed on schools moving into Division I for the length of the waiver.

The email dated April 10 was first reported by Yahoo! Sports. "As you are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant economic turmoil has resulted in the direct financial crisis for higher education since at least the Great

Depression," the commissioners wrote.

MAC Commissioner Jon Steinbrecher told the AP the request was to "build flexibility into the decision-making process" schools will be facing.

NCAA rules require Division I schools to sponsor at least 16 varsity sports. The commissioners also requested lifting rules that require schools:

- Offer a minimum of 200 athletic grants-in-aid per year or spend at least \$4 million in grants-in-aid on athletes, and provide 90% of the permissible maximum grants-in-aid in football over a rolling two-year period.

- Once every two years on a rolling basis, average at least 15,000 in actual or paid attendance for all home football games. This requirement applies only to FBS schools.

- Play minimum numbers of total games and home games in sports such as baseball, football and basketball and minimum percentage of games against Division I or FBS competition in various sports.

Brand: Ionescu took home conference, national awards

FROM BACK PAGE

She helped the Ducks win the Pac-12 regular-season and tournament titles as a senior this season while averaging 17.5 points, 9.1 assists and 8.6 rebounds. She was named the conference's most outstanding player of the tournament and of the regular season.

The 5-foot-11 guard was also named AP Player of the Year and won the Wooden Award, the Naismith Trophy and Wade Trophy.

So it's no wonder shoe companies have flocked to her. Nike, which has obvious ties to Oregon through company co-founder and alum Phil Knight, is in the running, as are Puma and Under Armour. Ionescu has been training in the San Francisco Bay Area with Golden State's Steph Curry, Under Armour's most prominent

athlete. At a safe distance, of course.

"I would probably be in meetings with a lot of them, being able to meet a lot of the team and see how everything's done. But obviously everything's been done online, which has been a little bit different, and I'm still getting used to it," she said. "But I haven't made a decision yet on a shoe company. I'm assuming it will probably happen before the draft. But knowing me, who knows?"

NBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert will announce the draft picks on ESPN while Ionescu will be at home in Walnut Creek, Calif.

She'll miss the usual pomp and circumstance that comes with being selected first, but Ionescu understands there are bigger concerns behind the coronation.

FULL MLS season looking doubtful

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

Major League Soccer says the chances of returning to action in mid-May now look extremely unlikely and that achieving its goal of getting in a full 34-game regular season is also becoming increasingly difficult.

The league previously said it hoped to return around the second full week of May following what would have been an eight-week absence from game action. The league currently has a training moratorium for players through April 24 with the expectation that it will be extended.

"Although we hoped to return to play in mid-May, that is extremely unlikely based on the guidance of federal and local public health officials," MLS said in a statement Tuesday. "Our goal remains to play as many games as possible, and while we currently have enough dates to play the entire season, we recognize at this time that it may become difficult to do so."

In an interview with ESPN, MLS Commissioner Don Garber said there likely will be games without fans when play does resume and that multiple formats are being examined.

Los Angeles FC coach Bob Bradley told reporters Tuesday that he is on board with whatever route the league chooses. "Let's figure out how to get everybody going again. Let's make sure we reconnect with all our fans," Bradley said in a conference call. "And whether it's in one site, whether it's a short season that gets into the playoffs, I think what we will see when we finally get started again is that everybody will be completely on board and completely committed to the fact that after all of us

MLS scoreboard

Eastern Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Atlanta	2	0	0	6	4	2
Montreal	1	0	1	4	4	3
New York	1	0	1	4	4	3
Toronto FC	1	0	1	4	4	3
Chicago	1	0	1	3	3	3
D.C. United	1	0	1	3	3	3
New England	0	1	1	2	3	3
Orlando	0	1	1	2	3	3
Philadelphia	0	1	1	2	3	3
Cincinnati	0	2	0	0	3	5
Inter Miami CF	0	2	0	0	1	5
New York City FC	0	2	0	0	0	2

Western Conference

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Sporting KC	2	0	0	6	7	1
Minnesota United	2	0	0	6	8	1
Colorado	2	0	0	6	4	2
FC Dallas	1	0	1	4	4	3
Los Angeles FC	1	0	1	4	4	3
Seattle	1	0	1	4	4	3
Portland	1	0	1	3	2	3
Vancouver	1	0	1	3	2	3
Portland of Lake	0	1	1	1	1	2
LA Galaxy	0	1	1	1	1	2
San Jose	0	1	1	1	1	5
Houston	0	1	1	1	1	5
Nashville SC	0	1	1	1	1	3

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

All games postponed until May 10.

worked together to move through the challenge of this period, the game is going. And then we will be excited to partake in anything that gets put together."

Bradley said one of the challenges of not having a firm return date is keeping players motivated and focused during a layoff that will last at least two months and likely longer.

Bradley has the unique perspective of having played a match without fans when he coached the Egyptian national team in a 2012 World Cup qualifier against Mozambique that was held in an empty stadium.

He said if MLS games begin without fans in the stands, there will need to be a way to try to connect with supporters.

virus pandemic.

Ionescu said she would be excited by the opportunity to suit up for the Liberty, who will play in the Barclays Center whenever the WNBA season begins.

"And then just the marketability that there is in New York, and kind of the hustle and bustle, is something that I think could be not only beneficial to myself as a person, but as a brand, and for women's basketball," she said.

ESPN Analyst Rebecca Lobo spoke about Ionescu in a conference call Monday to preview the draft.

"She's got everything you'd want in the skill set but the No. 1 thing people talk about is her competitiveness and her competitive fire. Whether it's a player like Ionescu or Sue Bird, that's the thing that can separate

the great ones and she has proven that she has that and thrives in those moments and loves it and loves basketball," Lobo said.

Oregon teammates Satou Sabally and Ruthy Hebard could also be top-10 picks.

The Ducks finished 31-2 this season, which ended prematurely with the cancellation of the NCAA Tournament because of the pandemic. They were ranked No. 2 in the final AP Top 25.

Although Ionescu returned for her senior year in hopes of winning a national title, she said she has no regrets.

"I would say it was probably one of the best decisions of my life to come back, although there were many ups and downs through the year," she said. "I wouldn't have been anywhere else besides there."

OLYMPICS/BASEBALL

USADA tries out do-it-yourself drug testing for some

15 U.S. athletes are in agency's pilot program

By **EDDIE PELLIS**
Associated Press

DENVER — The typical day for Noah Lyles now looks something like this:

Drive to park. Unload weights from truck. Sprint on grassy field. Lift. And, now and then, head home and take a doping test.

The world champion sprinter is one of 15 American athletes who have volunteered to conduct in-home drug tests as part of a pilot program being run by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency. With anti-doping collections severely curtailed across the globe because of the coronavirus pandemic, USADA is looking at new options, in this case by asking a group of leading Americans to give urine and small dried blood samples at home.

"They asked me to do it, and I wasn't opposed to doing it," Lyles said. "It's a way to get my drug test in."

Athletes are still required to

fill out their whereabouts forms, and under this program, a doping control officer will connect with an athlete via Zoom or FaceTime during a prescribed window.

Athletes receive test kits at home and head into their bathroom to give urine samples while leaving their laptops outside the room. Under normal circumstances, the officer would come to the house (or wherever the athlete was at the time) and stand outside the bathroom. In this case, the officer looks on via the camera while the athletes are timed and their temperatures are monitored to ensure they are giving the samples in real time.

The blood test uses a new technology — dry blood sampling — in which athletes prick their arms and small droplets of blood funnel into a container. Athletes are responsible for packaging the samples and sending them back to testing labs.

USADA CEO Travis Tiggart says the program gives clean ath-



MARTIN MEISSNER/AP

Sprinter Noah Lyles is one of 15 United States athletes who have volunteered for in-home drug testing as part of a pilot program being run by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

letes a chance to prove they have remained clean during a time in which anti-doping regulators are having a difficult time reaching the numbers of athletes they normally would. It's an issue that will make the return to play — the Olympics are rescheduled for 2021 but other events are expected to come back sooner — that much more difficult to navigate.

"It was going to unnecessarily create a question when those athletes went to Tokyo and won, where people would say, 'You won

but you weren't tested,' during the pandemic," Tygart said. "How unfair is it for athletes who will be in those circumstances?"

Others taking part in the USADA program include Allyson Felix, Katie Ledecky, Emma Coburn and Sydney McLaughlin.

USADA hasn't been shy about these sort of test programs in the past. In 2008, it launched a pilot project that involved testing the efficacy of biological passports — which allows authorities to track athletes' blood over time for

abnormal changes — the likes of which are in common use today.

Tygart concedes the new system depends on athletes to do the right thing in an industry that has been rife with cheating.

"The people who play clean want to be true heroes and role models," Tygart said. "We also know there are some bad folks out there who will attempt to exploit it ... For the good of the athletes, anti-doping has to reinvent itself in times like these to stay relevant."

Governor OK with Arizona hosting MLB

By **RONALD BLUM**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey says his state is willing to host all 30 major league teams at the time public health concerns allow, which eventually could lead to the start of the baseball season primarily in empty spring training ballparks.

MLB and the players' association have had preliminary discussion of potential ways for the season to start if given the go-ahead by federal, state and local governments and health officials. Having all teams based in the Phoenix area is among the contingency plans being examined. There are 10 spring training parks plus the Diamondbacks' Chase Field, which has a retractable roof, and several college facilities.

"Arizona, at the right time, is very open minded to hosting whatever Major League Baseball would like from the state," Ducey, a Republican, said Tuesday. "At the time that it would be appropriate for public health, if Arizona were in a position to re-open, we have the facilities that are here."

"We have the hotel space that



ROB SCHUMACHER/AP

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said his state is well-equipped to host Major League Baseball games due to its hotel space and facilities.

is here," he said. "We all want to make certain that the metrics and the data are proper before we're able to go forward, but I think two words that would allow the country and the state of Arizona to know that things were headed back to normal would be: 'Play ball!'"

MLB also said Tuesday it is cutting the salary of senior staff by an average of 35% for this year due to the new coronavirus' impact on the season. MLB is guaranteeing paychecks to its full-time employees of its central office through May.

"I think we're all concerned that there's not going to be a season," Texas Rangers manager Chris Woodward said. "I don't

know when it's going to be safe, I think the virus will let us know. If that means that we start in June, July, August or not at all, we definitely are all kind of concerned that we may not be able to play this year, and that's a reality."

Ducey said he had spoken with Commissioner Rob Manfred about the all-Arizona option.

"There's a number of different scenarios," the governor said. "I think the first scenario that was talked about was the idea of these clubs coming, being in hotels and in a way, having their own stay-at-home orders whether it either be at the hotel, or inside the stadium, without fans. ... It's something that Arizona is open-minded to, and I'm open-minded to."

Senior staff's salary cut; all to be paid through May

By **RONALD BLUM**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball is cutting the salary of senior staff by an average of 35% for this year and is guaranteeing paychecks to its full-time employees of its central office through May.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred made the announcement Tuesday in a memorandum to staff, a copy of which was obtained by Associated Press. Manfred also said the commissioner's office will make all planned distributions to teams through May.

"As part of our effort to protect the organization, my senior staff and I have decided to reduce our compensation by an average of 35% for 2020 to help the organization weather this terrible storm," Manfred wrote in the memo, which described cost-cutting efforts.

"As a result of these developments, I am pleased to be in a position to ensure that all employees that received regular pay checks in April will continue to be paid through May 31," he wrote. "I am deeply grateful to the owners for supporting my decision to continue to support all of our employees in an environment where the owners and the clubs are facing

their own very difficult financial issues."

MLB's season was to have started March 26, and teams agreed to advance \$170 million to players in salary for the first 60 days of the season. As part of the deal, players agreed to give up claims to the remainder of their roughly \$4 billion in salary if no games are played.

MLB and the union have had only a preliminary discussion of potential ways for the season to start if given the go-ahead by federal, state and local governments and health officials. Having all teams based in the Phoenix area is among the contingency plans being examined.

"As you would expect, we are considering and analyzing a number of possibilities," Manfred wrote. "Only one decision, however, has been made with respect to the 2020 season: Major League Baseball will return to the field only when public health officials agree that it is appropriate to start and when we are convinced that our return to the field is safe for players, employees and fans. Moreover, we will never, in an effort to begin play, divert resources that are more appropriately devoted to public health initiatives and health care."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

April in Augusta not the same minus Masters

By PAUL NEWBERY
Associated Press

The Masters is so intertwined with Augusta, they added an extra day to spring break.

You see, the first full week of April isn't just a blip in time for this place.

It's their identity, their way of life, their cart path to success.

A restaurant or bar can take a huge step toward profitability off the business it generates in a single week. An ahead-of-its-time industry sprung out of the locals renting their homes to strangers to accommodate the influx of fans, sponsors and media. From ticket brokers to impromptu parking-lot attendants, it seems everyone in the east Georgia city of 200,000 has figured out a way to make a buck off the first major golf championship of the year.

But the Masters is more than just commerce. Relationships are made out on the course, over a pimento cheese sandwich perhaps. Or afterward, over a late-night bourbon and cigar. Then, the whole cycle repeats itself, year after year, decade after decade.

In some ways, it has the feel of a family reunion.

"We obviously do a lot of business that week," said Mark Cumins, who 35 years ago co-founded one of the city's most famous restaurants, TBoonz steakhouse, right down the road from Augusta National Golf Club. "But it's not just the money. People have been coming for a long time. We like 'em. Even though it's a busy, busy, busy week, it's a good time. That's what makes the Masters special."

Of course, this tradition unlike any other is on hold at the moment. The coronavirus pandemic has killed thousands, forced nearly everyone to hunker down in their homes, and shut down sporting events around the world.

For the first time since a three-year hiatus during World War II, the Masters will be held in its usual slot on the calendar, serving as sort of an unofficial kickoff to spring.

The tournament is now set for November, when all those booming drives and tricky putts will be accompanied by the changing leaves of fall rather than azaleas blazing forth in all their colorful glory, the



(TIM DOMINICK, THE (COLUMBIA, S.C.) STATE, ABOVE AND CURTIS COMPTON, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION, BELOW/AP)

Above: Fans watch on the par-three 16th hole during a practice round for the Masters at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., on April 4, 2011. **Below:** A guard at the entrance gate to the course, currently closed. For the first time since a three-year suspension caused by World War II, this tradition unlike any other wasn't held in its usual slot on the calendar.

hope of spring replaced by the gloom of an approaching winter.

Everyone wonders what an autumn Masters will look like, what the world will look like in seven months.

"We don't what the know rules will be," Cumins said. "Are people even going to want to go out to crowded places?"

Until now, Masters week always coincided with spring break for Augusta's schools, largely to accommodate another tradition that predates the Airbnb era. Many locals clear out of their homes for the week, heading off on vacation and freeing up space for all those visitors who couldn't possibly be handled by the city's limited hotel space.

Even that comes with an extra Augusta touch.

Since the tournament doesn't end until early Sunday evening, and most of those renters need to stay on until the next morning, the schools tacked on an extra day to the week-long break. The kids don't have to resume classes until the Tuesday after the Masters.

"Of my friends, I would say probably 80



to 90% rent out their homes, and have been for years," said Suzi Hall, whose two-story home is just a few miles from the course. "It's a huge industry."

For at least 15 years, Hall and her husband have rented their five-bedroom house

to a contingent of AP reporters and editors covering the Masters.

Their two daughters were little girls when that tradition began.

Now, one is married, the other just completed graduate school.

Washington Road is usually the epicenter for Masters week, a hodgepodge of sprawling strip malls, fast-food joints and, of course, John Daly, who sets up his camper in the Hooters parking lot to sign autographs, pose for pictures and sell all sorts of kitschy merchandise.

Last week, the parking lot was empty other than barriers adorned with hastily drawn signs, showing customers where they can pick up to go orders.

The hoopla of the Masters stretches beyond Washington Road. A few miles away, the French Market Grille would normally be in the midst of doling out spicy Cajun cuisine to packed houses. Instead, owner Walter Clay has been making dinners for laid-off employees who need all the help they can get.

Athletes, coaches use lockdown to reconnect with family

By DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

Blake Wheeler and the Winnipeg Jets would have likely been in the playoffs last week, but for the coronavirus shutdown.

Now the seven-time All-Star forward is home for dinner each night with his family.

And for the activities, all afternoon. And the teaching, policing and entertaining every morning with his wife, Sam; 7-year-old son, Louie; 4-year-old daughter, Leni; and 2-year-old son, Mase.

"Mase, since he's been born, he doesn't want anything to do with me, really, until like a month ago," Wheeler said. "Now that I'm here all the time, he's starting to realize that I am his dad."

The 82-game NHL schedule, with half of those on the road, means Wheeler is absent from trick-or-treating and Thanksgiving turkey more often than not. He is normally away from home



JULIO CORTES/AP

Maryland coach Brenda Frese, right, said the shutdown has given her time with her husband and 12-year-old twin boys.

more than one-third of every night in any given year.

Thousands of athletes know that sting. For all the wealth, privilege and rewards elite sports can

provide its participants, few vocations require more time away from loved ones. This is what they signed up for, but some parts of life can't be priced out.

"I appreciate the gift of time and being able to spend it with my family," said Maryland women's basketball coach Brenda Frese, whose fourth-ranked Terrapins might well have been in New Orleans earlier this month for the Final Four.

When the NCAA Tournament was canceled, Frese hunkered down with her husband, Mark, and their 12-year-old twin boys. She is a middle school tutor now, too.

For all parents, there is no denying homebound days have been draining.

"My 2-year-old gets up at about 5 in the morning," Minnesota Wild forward Zach Parise said. "He naps from like 1 to 3, and that's our time to take a deep breath."

Parise and his wife, Alisha, also have 6-year-old twins to look after. He recalled falling asleep watching television at 8:30 one night—a similar tale to that of his Central Division rival.

"We get 'em all down by about 8 on a good night, and then there's a half hour of just numbness," Wheeler said.

St. Louis defenseman Alex Pietrangelo and his wife, Jayne, have 20-month-old triplets. Like many of his peers, Pietrangelo has been reminded anew how much there is to handle while dad is at the rink.

"There's not enough time in the day. I'm not even working right now, and I can't even find enough time to do something for myself," Pietrangelo said on a conference call as his kids were clamoring for more time outside.

Opportunity beckons, of course, in the gift that is presence.

"You don't get these days back,"

said University of Tennessee football coach Jeremy Pruitt, gratefully describing extra time with his infant daughter. He and his wife also have boys ages 4 and 2 at home.

Minnesota men's basketball coach Richard Pitino took his 3-year-old daughter on a drive to count neighborhood dogs. He and his wife, Jill, also have an 8-year-old daughter and a 5-year-old son.

Tampa Bay Lightning defenseman Ryan McDonagh has relished the laughter from conversation with his 3-year-old daughter he otherwise would have missed on the NHL circuit. Scooter rides around the block have replaced the morning skate.

"She gets so excited every day to do that with me, now that we've done it for a couple of weeks in a row," McDonagh said. "It's fun to see the joy in their face. It really makes you love them even more."

SPORTS

BASKETBALL

Improving her
BRANDOregon's Ionescu looks
ahead to WNBA careerBY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore.

With the spotlight on her growing ever brighter, Sabrina Ionescu is aware she's becoming her own brand.

One of the most decorated players in women's college basketball, Ionescu is about to go pro with the WNBA Draft coming up Friday. She's widely expected to be selected No. 1 by the New York Liberty.

She's also being courted by shoe companies for what could be an unprecedented endorsement deal. On top of it all, she's

finishing her master's degree, fittingly in advertising and brand responsibility.

Ionescu said Oregon has prepared her to understand how much impact she can have in the community and on women's basketball.

"It's going to be a learning process of just going into a bigger market with so many things going on. And I think I'm just going to have to find my niche and find what's important to me and what's going to help me — and our team — and kind of use

that to the best of my ability," she said on a video call with reporters Tuesday.

Ionescu, who won AP All-American honors three times, shattered the NCAA career triple-double mark (for both men and women) with 26 and became the first player in college history to have 2,000 points, 1,000 rebounds and 1,000 assists.

SEE BRAND ON PAGE 21

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Do it yourself

USADA tries out home
drug-testing plan » Page 22

Oregon guard Sabrina Ionescu is the first player in college basketball history to record 2,000 points, 1,000 rebounds and 1,000 assists.

DAVID ZALUBOWSKI / AP



TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

